

Home & Middle East News

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Sfeir paints bleak Lebanon picture

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's Maronite Christian patriarch, in an Easter message, painted a bleak picture of the country, citing lack of sovereignty, human rights breaches and an acute economic crisis.

Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir, speaking few days after Lebanon marked the 20th anniversary of the start of the country's devastating 1975-90 civil war, warned the situation must be rectified "before it is too late."

"Our national will is captive, human rights are not always respected, the administration is worn-out, patronage is prevalent," Patriarch Sfeir, widely seen as the last effective Christian Voice in Lebanon, said at a weekend sermon attended by Maronite President Elias Hrawi and other officials.

"Lebanese are suffering at this stage of their national life more than in the past few years," he said in the speech from his seat of Birkirkara in the Christian heartland north of Beirut.

A national reconciliation pact signed in Taif, Saudi Arabia, in 1989 ended the civil war a year later and the country has since launched a slow-paced reconstruction campaign.

Referring to grievances among Lebanon's 1.4 million once-dominant minority Christians they are being discriminated against, he said: "Rule, contrary to what is stipulated in the (Taif) national accord, is not balanced."

Many Christians who say their community emerged weakened from the 1975-90 civil war argue the Arab-brokered Taif pact which divided power equally between Christians and Muslims is being implemented in a way disfavouring them.

Traditionally opposed to

Damascus' political stranglehold over Beirut, many Christians argue Lebanon will not be truly free until Syria's 35,000 troops, acting as peacekeepers, and Israel's 1,000-strong occupation force in South Lebanon leave.

The Christians, most of whom boycotted parliamentary polls in 1992 saying they wanted elections free of Damascene tutelage, say they are not well represented in government and parliament.

Patriarch Sfeir, also a cardinal, said rivalry over public jobs on a sectarian basis has overburdened the cash-starved treasury and the economic crisis gripping the country was exhausting Lebanese.

"Debts are accumulating one month after another," he added.

Lack of trust in post-war Lebanon war preventing hundreds of thousands of Lebanese who emigrated during the war from returning "at a time when the homeland is in dire need to their energies and brains," Patriarch Sfeir said.

"All of this needs to be rectified before it is too late," he said.

"If the train of (Middle East) peace arrives and we are still in this situation and have not prepared the plans which allows us to join the march, we don't know what our fate will be."

The government of Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri has launched a multi-billion dollar reconstruction campaign, hoping Lebanon would regain at least part of its role as a business and financial centre in a peaceful Middle East.

But the priorities and pace of his programme have been under fire and many Lebanese are bitter at the economic hardships they still face.

Denktash faces run-off in presidential election

NICOSIA (AFP) — Veteran Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash faces a run-off against a former ally in a presidential vote in breakaway northern Cyprus after failing to clinch a first round Saturday, official results showed.

It will be the first time Mr. Denktash, running for his third term as president, has been forced into a second round of balloting in 30 years of power.

Mr. Denktash, 71, won 40 per cent of the first round vote, according to results based on 82 per cent of the poll.

He now faces a head-on meeting next Saturday with Dervis Eroglu, leader of the National Unity Party which Mr. Denktash helped set up before the two men fell out over intercommunal talks on Cyprus.

"I regret the party political divisions marking this presidential election, while by definition the president is above parties," Mr. Denktash said late Saturday.

Mr. Eroglu, prime minister from 1985 to 1993, won 24 per cent of the first round vote behind Mr. Denktash who needed an absolute majority to avoid a run-off.

Mr. Denktash is running as an independent but is supported by the centre-right Democrat Party, one of the two ruling coalition parties.

Jordan Times

Tel: 667171

42 accused deny charge in Egyptian court trial

CAIRO (Agencies) — Forty-two suspects entered pleas of innocent Sunday to charges that they were members of a terrorist group attempting to overthrow the government.

Six of the defendants also told the judge they were tortured in prison, and the judge ordered the court doctor to investigate.

There was no report about medical checks for five other defendants who had complained of torture at a previous hearing.

The government denies it is mistreating prisoners.

The 42 are charged with membership in the Jihad group, which assassinated President Anwar Sadat, and with attacks against the government. The group has operated in recent years under the name Vanguards of Conquest.

Conviction can result in a death penalty or long prison terms.

The defendants include three militants serving prison terms for the 1981 shooting of Sadat. The prosecutor introduced evidence from handwriting experts indicating that the three wrote letters from jail to their followers on the use of weapons and explosives.

Sunday's session was mainly procedural. The judge, who cannot be identified for security reasons, heard the defendants enter their pleas, then registered the names of their attorneys.

The next hearing was scheduled for April 29.

Families and lawyers were allowed to attend. They had been banned from the first session April 12.

Some relatives complained they had not been able to see the detainees for four months.

The indictment says the defendants formed their group in 1988. Two members were accused of killing a policeman and stealing his weapons and murdering two Coptic Christians while robbing their jewellery shop in 1994.

Another is accused of stealing ammunition from an army depot. Others are charged with illegal possession of weapons, explosives and ammunition.

Extremists have waged a three-year campaign of violence to try to overthrow Egypt's secular government and replace it with strict Islamic rule.

The Turkish republic of northern Cyprus set up in 1983 is recognised only by Ankara, but Mr. Denktash

has been acknowledged as leader of his community since intercommunal strife first erupted in post-independence Cyprus in 1963.

Saturday's poll was seen as the first real test for Mr. Denktash in three decades of power. He won 70.2 per cent of the vote in 1985 and 66.7 per cent in 1990.

Mr. Denktash had said he would run for another five-year term but changed his mind because of what he called a deluge of appeals from his community.

A hardliner in stalled talks on setting up a U.N.-brokered federation, he campaigned on a pledge to make major progress in 1996 towards unifying the island.

The southern half of the city and most of its environs



An Israeli policeman examines the bullet-ridden car in which three Palestinians were shot dead in an ambush by an Israeli special unit in Hebron on Sunday. Three militants, belonging to an underground cell of the Ezzedin Qassam, the military wing of Hamas, had been wanted by the Israeli army (see page one). (AFP photo)

Families lose track of Hamas and Jihad members in crackdown

GAZA CITY (AFP) —

Crowds of veiled women and elderly men flock to Gaza City's central jail each day to search for relatives rounded up in a huge Palestinian police crackdown on militants.

Saturday was visiting day but most people were simply to find out where a son, father, or cousin had been locked up after police took them from their homes in a sweep of members of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Islamic Jihad.

More than 200 people have been arrested in the past week since the two groups claimed suicide bombings in the Gaza Strip which killed seven Israelis and an American.

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radical militants opposed to the autonomy agreement with Israel.

The suicide attacks on April 9 infuriated the Palestinian leader who has dismissed a reconciliation bid with opposition groups, insisting instead that they respect his agreements with Israel.

Those arrested can be taken to any one of the centres belonging to at least eight different Palestinian security services, including military intelligence, the special force 17 and general intelligence.

After questioning, they are either released or transferred to Gaza City's central Saray jail. Officials have no exact figure for those released.

Last week's arrests raised to around 350 the number of people held in Palestinian jails on suspicion of anti-Israeli attacks, according to lawyer Jamal Al Sussi. They include some 100 members of Islamist and other opposition groups held in the past six months.

Police say 150 militants from the armed wings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad are now behind bars, but Hamas dismissed the figure as inflated.

Only three, all Islamic Jihad members, have so far been charged and sentenced for up to 25 years by the new Palestinian state security court, a military court which allows no right of appeal.

Emad Abu Oudah, 24, said he was released from the

central prison after signing a declaration that he would obey the law or risk facing "maximum penalty."

During his four-day stay in jail, police asked him if he would welcome orders from his Hamas superiors to go on a suicide bombing mission.

"I told them each one of us has different family conditions, I have three children who need my care so I would not accept to become a suicide bomber," he said.

Mr. Abu Oudah, who was waiting to see his father, still in jail, said he was generally well treated during questioning. But he added: "I saw three people who had been taken from another prison to hospital, then to our cell. They had been badly beaten and were almost unconscious.

"Some interrogators are mean, they try to provoke us with insults and beat us if we respond."

Sometimes the interrogation turned into an interrogation of ideas.

"I told them they must release the detainees so we can all get together and agree," said Yousef Al Seifi, 75, a Hamas supporter. He was arrested with four of his sons, also Hamas members as they clashed with police during a raid on their home.

"We (Hamas) should decide to carry out no more operations in Gaza... we must protect both Hamas and the Palestinian Authority," he said.

Mr. Abu Oudah was released from the

country, no one can accept U.N. offices in Somalia now. It is even inappropriate to talk about a U.N. return into Somalia politics for the time being," Gen. Aideed stressed.

But on Saturday Mr. Ali Mahdi reiterated the need for the U.N. presence in Somalia to ease threats of another civil war and appealed to the world community to spare no efforts in helping the Somalis.

At a press conference in the Somali capital on Wednesday, Gen. Aideed accused the United Nations in general and U.N. Secretary General Bouteflika in particular of having "created most of the rival factions in Somalia and supplied them with arms and money to finance their war activities."

"No Somali with a sense of nationalism wants the revival of the U.N. activities in this

country, no one can accept U.N. offices in Somalia now. It is even inappropriate to talk about a U.N. return into Somalia politics for the time being," Gen. Aideed stressed.

Asked to comment on the current fighting in Hirak region north of Mogadishu between the Habr Gidir militia supporting Gen. Aideed and Mr. Ali Mahdi's own Hawaile supporters, Mr. Ali Mahdi appealed to both sides to stop fighting immediately.

"Their problem is negotiable if they are fighting for control of the road that links Mogadishu to the central regions," said Mr. Ali Mahdi.

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Iraq Kurdish children profit from Turkish army presence

ZHAKO (AFP) — Turkey's incursion into northern Iraq

has become a profitable enterprise for Iraqi Kurdish children who are making good money from selling food and cigarettes to the troops.

Every day after sunrise, Kerim Abdullah, a 13-year-old Kurdish boy, fetches newly-laid eggs from his henhouse and takes them to Turkish soldiers encamped across the road from his village.

Other boys are already waiting there in his village of Tishkawa, some with different brands of cigarettes, the others with a large selection of chewing gums or fresh yoghurt.

In return, children also get to study tanks, cannon and other sophisticated military equipment that they had only ever seen on television until March 20, when Ankara launched its military offensive against Turkish Kurdish separatist guerrillas based in the area.

More than 50 children are running small businesses catering for three Turkish camps along the road between the Iraqi border town of Zakho and Batufa, a small town about 30 kilometres further east.

"Since the Turkish army arrived, I have done good business. They like our fresh

U.S. soldiers in 'friendly fire' incident awarded medals

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Three U.S. soldiers in a unit that accidentally killed an army sergeant with "friendly fire" during the Gulf war nonetheless received bronze stars for their actions, according to a report.

The soldiers were awarded the medals based on "misleading statements and misrepresentations" by three of their commanding officers, according to a confidential General Accounting Office (GAO) report on the army's inquiry into the incident, obtained by U.S. News and World Report.

The GAO informed the army of its findings in May 1994. And last August, the army inspector general urged the army to revoke the awards. The army says it has begun that process, the magazine said.

Sergeant Douglas "Lance" Fielder, 22, was killed and another soldier was wounded Feb. 27, 1991, when troops of the Third Armoured Cavalry regiment strayed outside their assigned battle area and, mistaking Fielder and four others for Iraqi troops, fired on their disabled ammunition carrier.

Three soldiers under the command of Col. Starr, Lt. Col. Daly and Capt. Friesen received the bronze stars that are now in dispute.

According to the GAO, the soldiers were honoured for "bravery and valour," "for clearing the sector of enemy" and "exceptional meritorious heroism in the face of hostile fire."

The citations were based on false statements by Col. Daly, Lt. Col. Starr and others in the unit, the GAO said. In the case of two awards, the incident was placed at an Iraqi airfield 27 kilometres northeast of where Fielder was killed, which "seriously masked the actual events of the friendly fire," the GAO said.

Earlier inquiries which cleared the officers were "incomplete, inaccurate and not supported by available evidence," the GAO found.

HIZB RAILWAY

Home News

Abul Ragheb, Bahraini officials discuss upgrading economic pact

MANAMA (Petra) — Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb opened talks here Sunday with Bahraini government leaders in order to upgrade a Bahraini-Jordanian economic agreement signed in 1975.

The talks covered topics of common interest to both countries, primarily on industry, agriculture, culture, tourism and transport.

Mr. Abul Ragheb's talks with Bahraini Minister of Industry and Trade Habib Qasim will pave the ground for Monday's meeting of the joint Jordanian-Bahraini ministerial committee which will tackle economic and commercial topics and the upgrading of the 1975 agreement.



Ali Abul Ragheb

The minister of industry and trade is tomorrow expected to open Jordan's industrial fair in Manama.



Amman Mayor Mamoun Abbadi, discussing the application of modern technology and management in municipal affairs (Petra photo)

Arab delegates review modern methods in municipal management

AMMAN (Petra) — Various challenges and adverse political circumstances have affected the Amman municipality's performance in the past, but despite limited resources, it has been able to meet the growing needs of its expanding population, said Amman Mayor Mamoun Abbadi.

Opening a three-day symposium Sunday on the use of modern technology and management in municipal affairs, on behalf of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Dr. Abbadi outlined

Amman Municipality's services to residents and businesses.

Only through modern techniques, sound management and careful planning can municipalities cope with the requirements of the modern age, the mayor said.

Organised by Amman Municipality in cooperation with the Arab Institute for Cities Development, the seminar is expected to tackle such topics as disposal of garbage and waste, recycling used products, modern road paving, organisation of traffic

and transport services in cities and training of personnel requirements.

The institute's director, Mohammad Hammad, emphasised the need for municipality staff and engineers to familiarise themselves with modern technology to deal with their town's growing needs and problems.

The 50 participants to the seminar came from Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, Algeria, Syria, Morocco, and Egypt.



House Speaker Saad Hayel Sour Sunday receives visiting Speaker of the Yemeni Lower House Abdul Wahab Mahmoud, who is accompanied by Yemeni ambassador to Jordan Hussein Ahmad Lawzi, to discuss cooperation among Arab parliaments (Petra photo)

Senior Jordanian, Yemeni parliamentarians discuss advancing cooperation at Arab level

AMMAN (J.T.) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Saad Hayel Sour Sunday said Jordanian-Yemeni relations are a model of brotherly Arab relations.

Mr. Sour's statement was made following a meeting he had with Deputy Speaker of the Yemeni Lower House Abdul Wahab Mahmoud.

Dr. Mahmoud and Mr. Sour stressed the need for closer coordination and cooperation among Arab parliamentarians with a view to crystallising united positions at the regional and in-

ternational levels.

The two officials reviewed the outcome of the Rabat meeting of the Arab Parliamentary Union, which was held early this month, and means of enhancing inter-Arab parliamentary work.

They also discussed the current developments in Arab and international arenas, in addition to means of advancing bilateral relations in the parliamentary field.

The two sides agreed to exchange visits and experiences.

In a statement to Jordan

Television after the meeting, Dr. Mahmoud said he discussed with Mr. Sour means of cooperation and coordination between both houses, adding that a Jordanian parliamentary delegation will visit Yemen directly after the Eid holiday next month.

He voiced hope that both sides can come up with a mechanism for joint work between Jordanian and Yemeni parliament chambers.

The meeting was attended by the Yemeni Ambassador to Jordan Hassan Ahmad Lawzi.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Japanese officials hold talks at WAJ of WAJ's maintenance workshops.

Dutch team here to study airports expansion

AMMAN (Petra) — A Japanese delegation Sunday arrived in Amman to hold talks with the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) on a \$7.2 million Japanese grant offered to the Kingdom in implementation of an agreement signed by the two governments earlier. The delegation will prepare tender documents and the technical specifications of equipment which will be imported through the grant to improve the performance

Jordan, Iraq study proposed pipeline

By P.V. Vivekanand

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and Iraq are studying a proposal to build a \$1.4 billion pipeline to pump Iraqi crude to the Zarqa refinery and replace the present trucking system, which is hazardous and costly. Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Samih Darwazeh said Sunday.

The 950-kilometre pipeline, which will run from Haditha in northwest Iraq to the Jordan Petroleum Company in Zarqa, will have an installed capacity to pump 250,000 barrels per day (b/d) of Iraqi crude, but initial pumping will be limited to 100,000 b/d, said Mr. Darwazeh.

Mr. Darwazeh, who discussed the idea with his Iraqi counterpart while on a visit to Baghdad last week, said the idea was at its "very preliminary stages" and needed closer study.

However, he affirmed that

it was a strategic decision to build the pipeline, which will replace the 200-plus tanker-trucks which ferry about 60,000 barrels of Iraqi crude and 20,000 barrels of fuel to Jordan every day.

"Our objective is to cover the needs of Jordan — namely 250,000 barrels of oil" by the year 2000, he told the Jordan Times in an interview. The first 100,000 b/d will be processed at the Zarqa refinery and the rest would be pumped as and when a planned refinery is built at Aqaba.

According to a government study made available to the Jordan Times, rough estimates put the cost of 122-centimetre diameter pipeline at \$1.4 billion, with \$1 billion to be spent in Jordanian territory and the rest in Iraq. About \$1.1 billion is estimated to be spent in local currency.

The same study also indicated that work on the pipeline should begin in 1996 and

be complete by 1998, so that the expected rise in local demand for crude could be met in full.

The Zarqa refinery has an installed processing capacity of 100,000 b/d. The proposed refinery is to be built at Aqaba will have a similar capacity. The Aqaba project is estimated to cost \$500 million, and the implementation time is projected between 1996 and 2000.

Mr. Darwazeh categorically denied reports that Jordan intended to export Iraqi crude to be trucked overland to Zarqa, he said. The owner of the truck gets JD 6.05 per tonne and the rest goes to the contracting company as insurance and management fees.

About 2,000 trucks are involved in the cross-border movement, with at least 200 trucks coming in every day.

Asked how the government viewed the prospect of the truckers losing the contracts as and when the pipeline is built, the minister said:

"We hope that by the time we build the pipeline, there will be transportation needs from Aqaba to Iraq and from Aqaba to other parts of the pipeline," he said.

Jordan also wanted to replace the present form of transport of Iraqi oil to Jordan in tanker trucks — "which is very tedious and very costly" — the minister said.

Under the latest contract, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources pays JD 6.5 for a tonne of Iraqi crude to be trucked overland to Zarqa, he said. The owner of the truck gets JD 6.05 per tonne and the rest goes to the contracting company as insurance and management fees.

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The Iraqi oil supply to Jordan is exempted from the international sanctions against Baghdad since no cash is changing hands.

According to the minister, the oil is calculated at international market prices — reviewed on a monthly basis — less by "about \$1 (per barrel)" since we transport the oil."

Part of the oil comes in settlement of pre-Gulf crisis Iraqi debts to Jordan, and Amman settles the other part with food and medicine exports to Iraq.

Tourism to Petra doubles as studies continue into limiting numbers of visitors to site

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Just shy of the impending tourist season, the Petra Archaeological Office reported Sunday that the number of tourists to Petra has so far this year doubled over last year's figures. Since January, 68,922 tourists have entered the ancient Nabataean city as compared to 33,450 by this time last year.

The archaeological office also reported that revenues from entrance fees at the site stood at JD 1,190,184 for the first three months of this year compared to last year's figure of JD 163,687. However, director of the office Suleiman Farajat said that when reviewing the totals it is important to bear in mind that the entrance fee to Petra was raised late last year from JD 5 to JD 20.

The increase in tourism is often attributed to Jordan's

peace treaty with neighbouring Israel, however, Mr. Farajat said that department does not record the nationalities of Petra's guests and therefore has no idea of number of Israelis entering the site.

"Our guests are only categorised as 'foreigners' or 'Jordanians,'" he said, pointing out that in January 1995, 12,687 foreign visitors entered Petra, again nearly doubling the number of foreign visitors in January 1994 which numbered 6,850.

The Archaeological Department's statistics show that the number of Jordanians visiting the city has also increased — 3,452 thus far this year compared to 2,100 in 1994.

The number of tourists now entering Petra on a daily basis reaches 1,500, Mr. Farajat told the Jordan Times, adding that the figure of 300 tourists a day as reported by Al Dustour Arabic daily was incorrect.

Consideration is being given to a daily limit to the

number of tourists allowed to enter Petra. A 300-page Petra Management Plan proposed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) cited "too high concentration of visitors" as one of the "major issues identified" as a "principal threat to the site's integrity."

Mr. Farajat told the Jordan Times that "a limit of 1,500 visitors is being considered by the ministry, but to date, has not been implemented here in Petra."

However, Minister of Tourism Abdul Ilah Khatab has said that the elimination of the horses will somewhat increase Petra's tourist capacity. "The idea," he said, "is that we don't want to turn people away. However, we may need a reservation system or something similar to organise the flow of tourists in the future. In any case, we should be very concerned about the carrying

capacity of the area."

The UNESCO Management Plan proposed a daily limit of 2,000-2,500 visitors, considering that horses were not used and that traffic through Petra was one way — another option currently under study at the ministry.

A third measure to preserve the Petra area was the creation three weeks ago of the Petra Regional Authority, also a recommendation of the UNESCO plan.

The authority is a unified umbrella of different government departments and non-governmental organisations (NGO) to coordinate a development and management plan for the Petra and Wadi Musa areas. It includes the ministers of municipal affairs and tourism, the director of the Antiquities Department, the minister of planning, and three private sector establishments, among others.

'Rape, murder trial of Zarqa man starts today'

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The trial of a 47-year-old Zarqa man who is married to two women, and has a son, 7, and a daughter, 8, could face the death penalty.

Last year, a 57-year-old man, also from Zarqa, was executed in July after being found guilty of the rape and brutal murder of an eight-year-old Zarqa boy.

Meanwhile, Civil Defence Department (CDD) from Sunday retrieved the body of an 18-year-old shepherd who drowned in a reservoir in Mafrqa.

According to CDD and police reports, one of the victim's friends told police that the victim, Husni Jamil Salem, went to swim and take a bath in a reservoir in Al Khaldieh area. A few minutes later, the victim vanished, the reports said.

The accused said that he took Samar's body and dumped it in a valley near Abu Alia area in Tabarbour. The body was discovered two days later by a shepherd.

If convicted, Mr. Sheish, who is married to two women, and has a son, 7, and a daughter, 8, could face the death penalty.

The suspect, who was arrested in March, confessed to police that he lured the child to a wooden area in Yajouz then raped her.

The child started bleeding, and the suspect told police he had no choice but to kill her by strangulation to conceal his crime, police reported.

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Opinion & Analysis

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Playing fair at U.N.

THE U.N. Security Council made an unsuccessful bid last week to allay the anxieties and fears of the non-nuclear countries when it adopted a half-backed resolution on the eve of the New York meeting to discuss the extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). One article in the resolution spoke of offering "technical, medical, scientific or humanitarian assistance" to countries which stay away from developing or possessing nuclear weapons even if they were threatened by them. It is not surprising that the greater number of the nuclear have-nots immediately registered their disappointment with the council's action because what they had been waiting for and expecting was something much more coherent and effective. Non-nuclear states which renounce the right to possess weapons available to the big and mighty nations deserve a more meaningful assistance should they be threatened by or become the targets of nuclear attacks. The least that is needed in this context is an ironclad assurance that the attacking or threatening country would be met with a resolute counterattack or threat from the five permanent members of the council.

This is not to mention that as things stand now with the council, in terms of its composition and rules of procedure, there can be no fail-safe guarantee that the principle five nuclear powers would or could indeed exercise this prerogative should it be agreed upon as a quid pro quo for accepting the indefinite extension of the treaty. The dismay of the weaker countries, as represented mainly by the Non-Aligned Movement nations, over the preparatory work being done in anticipation of this week's meeting in New York, was made loud and clear when they made it well-known in advance that they are not prepared to give the nuclear powers a blank check before their reasonable demands are met.

Even the pledge by the major nuclear powers to negotiate in "good faith," for nuclear disarmament does not go far enough to satisfy the legitimate concerns of the have-nots. The language used in the resolution suggests that the permanent members of the council have not been negotiating in good faith all along. This is one factor. Another is connected to the kind of assurances that the nuclear countries will give on their intentions for the future. Then there is the question of making the pious commitment to nuclear disarmament a sine qua non for the desired extension by making the renewal of the treaty contingent on the implementation of the promise to end nuclear armament within an agreed period. Short of doing what is necessary, there is every reason to suspect the real intentions of the big powers in attempting to extend the treaty.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

REGARDLESS OF the different views on the U.N. Security Council's decision that allowed Iraq to sell limited amounts of oil to buy medicine and food for its people, the step marks the beginning of the end of the unjust sanctions that have been imposed on the Iraqi people since August 1990, says Tareq Masaerweh, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily Sunday. As the world witnesses intensified moves on the part of Iraq, some Arab states and other nations to end the embargo, one can only admire the heroic steadfastness of the Iraqi people, who have been subjected to hardship and deprivation for so long, said the writer. Countries hostile to Iraq and the Arab people in general have been allocating millions of dollars to bring about the downfall of the Iraqi regime, which, said the writer, can only be changed from within; and so all enemy plans were futile all these years. All those Arabs who conspired with the enemy against their Iraqi brethren and Arab Nation to change the regime in Baghdad have failed in their bid, while the Kurds in the north, who chose to side with the enemy, have ended up serving the interests of the Turkish government and acting against their own kinsmen, said the writer.

AL DUSTOUR columnist Ali Safadi paid tribute to France and the French leaders for their consistent and firm policy with regard to the status of Jerusalem. Despite their involvement in the presidential campaigns and despite Jewish pressure, French leaders have proved to be sincere in their support for Arab rights and have not budged from their declared position and their non-recognition of Israel's illegal annexation of Arab Jerusalem, said the writer. Stressing the importance of such stand from a major world power concerning Arab rights, the writer said the French support for Arab and Palestinian rights come at a time when the Middle East peace process is passing through a crucial stage.

Human Rights File

By Waleed Sa'di

All Jordanians are equal

THE CLASH between Circassian and Salti students at the University of Jordan last week is a grim reminder that the Jordanian house may not be in order to the extent that we all wish it to be. The latest outburst of violence between Jordanians on ethnic or origin basis was not an isolated incident. Similar events occurred at several university campuses and even during football matches. All these internal conflicts have been taking place against the backdrop of increasing de facto distinctions being made between Jordanians.

What exacerbates the local scene even further is the rise of tribalism and family associations. We are used to tribal loyalties and solidarities. But this trend has taken a turn for the worst when families large and small began to form their own associations and establish home headquarters for them as if they are some sort of additional features of the Jordanian house.

These trends lead me to the conclusion that we need a domestic peace process as much as we need an external or regional peace process. There is no sense in promoting peace on the outside if peace at home is allowed to erode to the extent that Jordanians become factionalised along ethnic or racial or religious or origin basis.

This assessment further leads me to the conclusion that perhaps we have not been doing our homework at the local level to the extent that is commensurate with the challenges of the new era facing the area. House tending is therefore urgently called for to promote a contemporary sense of citizenship by combating and preventing discrimination between Jordanian along racial, religious, ethnic or origin lines. Otherwise we all are going to inherit a situation that could be explosive and destabilising. I certainly do not have all the answers but I do know that we are all sowing the seeds for future domestic conflicts unless something is done to rectify current shortcomings. There are many reasons to suspect that this phenomenon is worrying to an increasing number of Jordanians across the board. Many so-called "saloon" talks are being devoted to this sensitive subject. The quiet discussions need to come up to the surface by all people who are genuinely concerned about the Kingdom and its future course. People who wish to stay silent are doing a great disservice to the country.

The beauty of this country lies in the fact that it is the flag bearer of the great Arab Revolt. This legacy in itself would impose on the Kingdom certain guidelines that are well enshrined in Arab nationalism as espoused by the revolution led by the late Sharif Hussein. What better proof of this than the fact that the army of Jordan is still called the Arab Army. There can be no differential treatment between one Jordanian and another under the crystal clear message of the founders of this country.

We have become parties to several international treaties on human rights, which would make any discrimination among Jordanians on whatever basis unlawful. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to cite, but one example, is clear on the illegality of according differential treatment to citizens whether in fact or in law. The relevant human rights bodies created by the international human rights conventions often call for affirmative action to rectify any existing or lingering discrimination between nationals of any given country. In the U.S., where the African-Americans were especially targeted for discrimination in the past decades, new laws have been enacted not only to end this discrimination but also to call for increasing effort so that blacks are proportionally represented in all walks of life in due course.

Closer to home, the people of this country may bear the main responsibility towards ending any current negative distinctions between Jordanians. This fact, however, would not excuse the state from taking effective action towards this objective. To begin with, there is an urgent need for a political will on the part of all the branches of government to stop the negative trends that seem to be mushrooming right and left. The articulation of a clear policy statement on this score is urgently called for. Even more pressing is state practices that would add credence to this aspired state policy. Discriminatory practices will not end unless and until there is a clear signal from the government that distinctions between citizens would not be tolerated in word and deed. Jordan can then offer a fine example for all the other Arab countries on contemporary nationality by sticking to the message of the Arab Revolution in spite of all the challenges and negative experiences.



Seeds of democracy in S. Arabia

By David Gardner

THE MAN who spoke first in the debate was an Egyptian Marxist. It was midnight in a wedding hall on the outskirts of Riyadh, and our host was a Saudi prince who had invited 100 intellectuals — a quarter of them from other Arab countries — to put their views on the politics, religion and culture of Saudi Arabia and the region.

Such open debate was "rarer than rain" in a society ruled on feudal lines by an absolute monarchy, a Palestinian academic observed, ignoring the freak showers that had just brought the desert into bloom. The prince's unique, if informal, *majlis* was a sign that something is stirring in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

"There is now a lot of debate, inside and outside the monarchy," says another member of the royal family. "But what is being discussed is the speed of reform; what to change, how to do it, how to pack it and sell it."

The House of Saud, which forged the modern Saudi Arabia in 1932 after a series of conquests, has overcome many challenges to its hegemony. It has managed the sudden arrival of great wealth from its ownership of a quarter of the world's oil reserves, followed by a downward spiral in oil prices; the importing of foreign labour equivalent to a third of the population; the 1979 seizure of the great mosque at Mecca by Islamist zealots, and the annual influx of two million Muslim pilgrims, including organised partisans of Iran's Islamic revolution; and the 1991 Gulf war, with the socially and politically discomfiting presence of some 800,000 foreign troops on Saudi soil.

"If you have looked at the emergencies and dislocation this country has been through since the 1950s — and you didn't know the outcome — you would surely have concluded that (the Saudi state) had not survived," smiles one middle-ranking member of the royal family. "But I agree that the challenge is not over, in some respects, it is just begin-

ning."

For years, the Al Saud have monopolised power and, in return, provided a subsidised livelihood for the masses and an affluent lifestyle for the elite. Now, however, the Al Saud grip on power is taut with unresolved tensions. Saudis are better educated and increasingly demanding, at a time when the government's reflex response to throwing money at the least twitch of discontent is finally being constrained by the effects of a decade of fiscal deficits.

Soft oil prices have led to a shortage of cash. Last year and this, the government decreed severe budget cuts to reduce the deficit from around nine per cent of gross domestic product in 1994 to about four per cent by the end of 1995. It has also delayed for rescheduled payments to foreign and Saudi contractors, and sharply raised hitherto minimal local fees for power, petrol, water, telephones and domestic flights. "We were living in a fat environment," says Abdul Rahman Al Zamil, deputy trade minister.

But there is little room for manoeuvre. Foreign assets have been run down to \$65 billion (\$40.6 billion) — about half pre-Gulf war levels or a third of holdings a decade ago — and these are illiquid. The kingdom spent up to \$60bn underwriting the Gulf war and is committed to \$80bn in capital outlays, two-thirds of it on weapons, worsening a 10-year-old trend of large current account deficits.

Government officials rightly point to achievements in developing infrastructure and diversifying away from crude oil production to petrochemicals, plastics and other industries. Mr. Al Zamil says \$16bn in spending cuts last year were "replaced" by an increase in private-sector investment of \$15bn, keeping growth marginally positive. But domestic growth does not supply the government with revenue, almost all of which comes from oil.

Part of the Saudi social contract is that there is no income tax, with corporate tax only on foreign companies, most of which have been set up under tax holi-

day schemes. King Fahd in January told his subjects this year's utility price rises were only temporary, but that depends on the oil market. The extra revenue raised by this year's budget would evaporate with little more than a \$1 drop in the price of crude.

Dissent in the kingdom is diffuse and hard to quantify, and is as likely to focus on corruption and the conspicuous consumption of some members of the royal family as on the overall policy of financial austerity.

The Saudi regime is to some extent a victim of its successes. In the last 25 years, half a million Saudis educated abroad have been exposed to outside influences, and the government has imposed education for a generation of women, who nevertheless remain invisible under the austere Islamic social code, segregated in public and at work. Civil service pay structures have not been changed for 14 years, making many young Saudis dependent on extended families to get by.

"This is a society in ferment," a Western diplomat says. Although tough decisions lie ahead — such as whether to introduce wider taxation and a mooted mini-budget with a further four per cent spending cut on top of 19 per cent in 1994 and six per cent this year — there is no effective mechanism for consultation. Two years ago King Fahd created a Majlis Al Shura (consultative council) to fill this vacuum. But although its 60 members are highly educated, they are nominated by the king, who may ignore them.

Policy-making can be hesitant, with public opinion tested only after a new policy has been announced. "You get the input to policy-making at the point of output," says one academic, referring to the frequent withdrawal of edicts once they are found to antagonise particular interest groups. Four years ago, a decree levying income tax on foreigners was revoked within 48 hours when it became clear that hospitals and universities dependent on them would grind to a halt.

"We are trying to provide the objective situation for gradual change," says one liberal prince, who acknowledges that "one of the obstacles to change is that we are co-opting the fundamentalists. The Mota'wa you see in the streets is part of that." Elections, and the integration of women into public life, "will eventually happen," he believes. King Fahd, he says, "takes time to make up his mind."

Opinions differ on the

risks monarchy might take on reform. The most unexpected speaker at that wedding-hall debate was Ahmad Al Tuweirji, one of the kingdom's most articulate dissidents, imprisoned in 1992 as a signatory of the first of half a dozen petitions to the king, calling, among other things, for elections to the Majlis Al Shura and an end to corruption. After softening up his audience with a risqué joke and some verse, he advocated pluralism, without calling the monarchy into question.

As one Islamist reformer puts it: "We have advanced materially, while retreating intellectually. (Elections) are an absolute necessity to preserve social cohesion and prevent breakdown. Some of our conceptions are simply wrong. There is nothing in our religion that says women can't participate fully in society. It is more (a question of) tradition."

Such voices underline that the traditional religious establishment has fallen into discredit because of its slavish adherence to the monarchy, and that younger religious leaders must be brought into the debate on reform; if they are excluded, they may fall under the spell of the fundamentalists who urge the Al Saud to live up to their severe, Wahhabi brand of Islam.

But as one experienced diplomat in the Kingdom warns, "reform implies reforms, it implies organisations, and there is no tolerance here for that." The government has cracked down on fundamentalists, while giving free rein to the Mota'wa, or religious police, to enforce social conformity.

"We are trying to provide the objective situation for gradual change," says one liberal prince, who acknowledges that "one of the obstacles to change is that we are co-opting the fundamentalists. The Mota'wa you see in the streets is part of that." Elections, and the integration of women into public life, "will eventually happen," he believes. King Fahd, he says, "takes time to make up his mind."

The Financial Times

Arafat, Islamists pull back from brink

By Robert Mahoney

Reuter

GAZA — On the surface Gaza looks as though it is becoming another Lebanon.

Basic ingredients for civil war are already in place — factional fighting, Islamic fundamentalism, an abundance of arms, poverty and the continued presence of Israeli troops.

Tension between Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the militant Muslim group Hamas and Islamic Jihad is the highest since Yasser Arafat took charge of the self-rule Palestinian authority last July.

But Mr. Arafat and the Islamists are now trying to pull back from the abyss, believing that open warfare would serve only Israel.

In interviews with Reuters, Islamic activists and PLO officials expressed anger and fear at the deteriorating political and security situation in the Gaza Strip. But most wanted to leave the door open for dialogue.

"I think in the future there must be a real, serious dialogue between Hamas and the authority," said Imad Falouji, an activist in Hamas and a founding member of its military wing Qassam.

He was speaking after what Islamists agreed was the heaviest crackdown Mr. Arafat had ever staged against them. More than 200 have been arrested since Islamic Jihad and Hamas suicide bombers killed seven Israeli soldiers and a U.S. woman going to Jewish settlements in Gaza on Sunday.

PLO sources said Mr. Arafat was furious, taking the attacks as an assault on his personal credibility and authority. He is stung by taunts that the 1993 peace accord has done nothing

but relieve Israel of the burden of policing Gaza.

"He thinks the Islamic movements have crossed the red line and put his autonomy project in serious danger," said an Islamic Jihad member. "So he has decided to fight back."

But not hard enough to provoke a violent backlash from groups that have small military wings but widespread political and social support.

"Arafat is reacting to Israeli pressure but Hamas will never point its guns at the chest of the authority," Hamas leader Sayed Abu Musaemah said. "Our every action proves this, even after Nov. 18 we did not take revenge," he said, referring to the killing by Palestinian police last year of 14 people during clashes with Hamas.

"Both sides are concerned there shouldn't be an escalation," Mr. Falouji said. "We know there is no alternative to Abu Ammar (Arafat) despite the difference in our ideologies."

Mr. Falouji said the first goal of both camps was the same, the creation of an independent Palestinian state. They differed only on the means.

"The Palestinian authority says we can reach our goals through negotiations. We say negotiation is not enough and events are proving us right. Armed struggle is necessary, Israel does not understand the language of dialogue," he said.

Mr. Arafat wants to live alongside Israel, while working with its sworn enemies, Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

"Israel controls the land, air and sea around the Gaza Strip," said an Israeli official. "Once the settlements are gone from there, what do we care what the Palestinians do to each other so long as it does not harm us."

LETTERS

Attitude towards animals must change

To the Editor:

ON BEHALF of the Jordanian Society for the Protection of Animals (JSPA), may I thank Ahmad Y. Majdoubah for writing the article "Pet responsibility, pet abuse and authorities" (the Jordan Times, April 13). It is a subject which has become of great concern to us.

Dr. Majdoubah is right when he says there is much ignorance about keeping pets. We receive many complaints about dogs being kept tied on very short chains without shelters from all weather, with no water, little food and no exercise. Consequently, the dogs excrete and urinate where they are tied and live a life of misery and extreme boredom, often becoming aggressive because of it. This is similar to humans being kept in a prison in unsanitary and inhumane conditions. The dog is being "punished" by being imprisoned merely for existing. We also receive complaints that neighbours who don't like pets take pot-shots at them or stone them over the garden wall.

Frequently, we are asked by the villagers in Wadi Seer why we walk the dogs we have at our new clinic, and sometimes children from three years upwards will throw stones at them while the dogs are actually on leads.

Children have been brought up to throw stones at dogs and cats as soon as they can walk, because the animals are regarded as "dirty." We recently found two kittens which had been stoned to death, one kilometre from the clinic. We have found many animals, including sheep, goats, donkeys and horses with an eye missing as a result of stone-throwing. Most dogs and cats are in fact very clean if looked after properly and trained the correct way. A disciplined animal is a pleasure to have, as is a disciplined child.

Most animal problems are caused by the ignorance of irresponsibility of owners, and not the animals themselves. Very few dogs are born vicious. If treated well from birth, the majority are very tractable and will be very faithful and friendly to a good owner. They will become aggressive if they are kept constantly tied short, have stones thrown at them, are not fed properly and are treated as if they are inanimate objects. They are then only defending themselves against abuse and indifference.

Dr. Majdoubah rightly says that people need to be educated about pets. In February 1994 JSPA began an educational programme about the care and welfare and respect of animals, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, visiting schools to give lectures and show slides and videos. The teachers also discuss various aspects with the children. It is interesting to note that many children think it is the right thing to do to regard dogs and cats as animals to be shot at and stoned. We also have a video on training pet dogs basic obedience, for those who need to learn.

Features

Kabariti heads for New York

(Continued from page 12)

tions and on mutual commitments towards disarmament."

He added: "We have to have commitments by all countries in favour of the regime of non-proliferation, both regionally and internationally."

Mr. Musa called for "true universality" of the treaty, arguing that its credibility would be undermined if it is not applied to all governments.

"We cannot accept a commitment on the part of some, and non-commitment on the part of others," he said.

Sudan and Iran issued a joint communiqué Saturday saying Middle East peace could not be achieved until the region is free of nuclear weapons.

The communiqué was issued at the end of a five-day visit by Iran's parliament speaker, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, who met with Sudan's military ruler, Omar Hassan Al Bashir and other officials.

The communiqué said the two nations concluded the peace process was intended

to maintain the "Zionist regime" in the region. It said liberating Jerusalem from Israeli rule should be a priority for Muslims.

Lebanon said meanwhile it will not sign an indefinite extension of the NPT until Israel does.

"We think that it is not possible to ask us as a non-nuclear state to sign a treaty like this one while nuclear states — especially ones in the region, and I mean Israel — are not asked to join the treaty," Foreign Minister Faris Bouez said.

Mr. Bouez was speaking to reporters at Beirut airport before heading for New York for the three-week U.N. conference.

Mr. Bouez said Beirut backed the principle of the treaty "but we think that the universality of the treaty — meaning the joining of nuclear states, especially Israel — will give the accord the necessary credibility."

He said he will consult with representatives of Arab states and non-aligned countries in "order to take the suitable stand according to this principle."

Baghdad rejects oil deal

(Continued from page 1)

Sheikh Mohammad, also crown prince of the UAE state of Dubai, in an interview with Al Sharq Al Awsat newspaper and carried by the UAE media.

"We have to work to bring them (Iraqi people) back to the ranks of the Arab Nation," he added.

Sheikh Mohammad said he stood by his remarks earlier this year "demanding lifting of the siege (U.N. embargo) of the Iraqi people and helping them return to their Arab Nation," the official WAM news agency quoted him as saying.

The UAE fought in the U.S.-led multinational force which defeated Iraq in the war over Kuwait, its partner in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

"No doubt Iraq had committed a grave mistake by occupying Kuwait. That is why we supported Kuwaiti people and fought along their side to regain their land," Sheikh Mohammad said.

"Thank God, Kuwait is back... and now we are obliged as Arabs not to let the Iraqi people down. We have to work to bring them back to the ranks of the Arab Nation," he added.

Iraq on Sunday also began preparing the country's be-

leaguered population for more hardship after rejecting the U.N. offer.

Reminiscent of the days prior to the 1991 Gulf war, the state-owned radio and television frequently interrupted its normal programme to carry snippets extolling the Iraqis and reminding them of their determination.

Stern face announcers reminded the Iraqis that how they shed "rivers of blood and offered the dearest sacrifices" in their fight against America. "You may have to do that again," said the announcers.

The television showed President Saddam talking to old women with men in the background vowing to fight "Satan America." It was not immediately clear when the pictures were taken.

Average Iraqis on the street appeared not convinced.

"We had high hopes that our government will accept the plan, now we see there is no ray of hope for us," said middle-aged woman interviewed on the street.

Most Iraqis went to bed Saturday in hope that their government will eventually accept the U.N. offer, but they woke up to read newspapers that ran banner headline giving reasons for rejecting the oil sell offer.

Calls for freedom on Easter

(Continued from page 1)

The dual holiday attracted thousands to the 800-year-old Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where according to tradition Jesus Christ was crucified, buried and resurrected.

Worshippers inched their way through the cavernous, dimly lit complex of chapels and shrines, which is shared by six churches including the Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Armenian and Egyptian Coptic communities.

Organ music and hymns mixed with the murmur of the crowd.

Near the entrance, the devout fell to their knees and kissed the stone of unction, where tradition says the body of Jesus was covered with a shroud and anointed after being removed from the cross.

Outside, hundreds of Arab Catholic scouts, a Palestinian youth group, paraded through the cobblestone alleys as parents watched.

In Gaza City, meanwhile, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat visited the Latin church, where he was greeted by hundreds of worshippers with smiles and kisses.

In the Vatican City, embracing the victims of civil strife, Pope John Paul II sent a message of peace to peoples seeking "recognition of their deepest aspirations," including the Kurds and Palestinians.

Elsewhere on the day Christians celebrate their belief in Christ's resurrection, armoured personnel carriers and troops guarded worshippers in the Philippines amid sharply heightened tensions between Christians and Muslims.

Police also deployed around doomsday churches in South Korea. Some of the sects predicted the world's destruction before Easter

dawn and dozens of the faithful prayed in anticipation of the end. When a predicted doomsday did not pan out in 1992, sect members rioted.

In his traditional "urbi et orbi" address from the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, the Pope spoke to the people of Algeria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Burundi and southern Sudan.

"To families torn apart by war, to the victims of hatred and violence... the church does not hesitate to renew the paschal message of peace, reminding everyone of our common origin in the one God," he said.

More than 50,000 people filled St. Peter's Square under an icy drizzle. An ocean of umbrellas covered the square, brightened by splashes of colour from tulips and rhododendron.

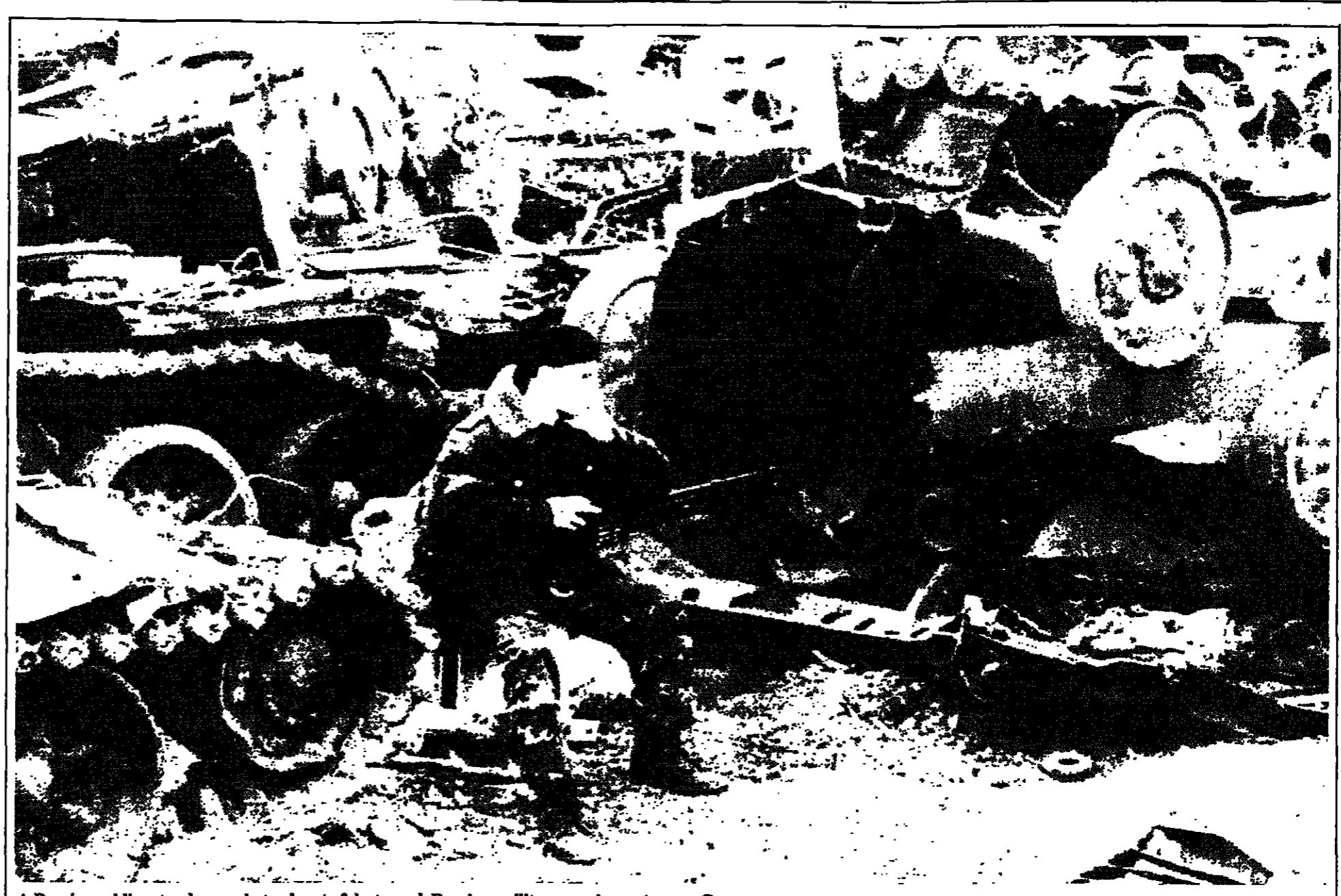
The 74-year-old Pope looked tired after Saturday night's Easter vigil in the basilica. But his voice was strong.

"Urbi et orbi" is Latin for "to the city and to the world." The phrase reflects the Pope's role as bishop of Rome and leader of the world's 950 million Catholics.

Earlier, Pope John Paul celebrated Easter Mass. This year it was inside the basilica because of the miserable weather.

"The church proposes dialogue as the only path able to promote just and fair solutions, for a coexistence marked with respect and mutual acceptance," he said.

While the pontiff frequently has expressed support for Palestinian rights, it was a rare mention of the Kurds.



A Russian soldier stands guard at a depot of destroyed Russian military equipment near Grozny

Ruins of Grozny seething with disease, distrust

By Sebastian Smith

Agence France Presse

GROZNY — Russian soldiers

charge triumphantly around Grozny in their tanks these days, but the city is in ruins, on the point

of epidemics, and seething with distrust.

The centre of the Chechen capital looks like it has suffered a major earth-quake. Skylines have abruptly changed. Entire streets of houses have been razed to their foundations.

Nine-floor apartment buildings have been blown apart.

Somewhere under all that rubble, which stretches from the city outskirts to the Presidential Palace, there are 5,000 corpses, estimated Umar Akhmadov, the city's chief sanitation doctor.

"There's a huge danger of cholera, typhus, dysentery," Dr. Akhmadov said. "It could happen today or tomorrow."

"At the current rate, it will take up to eight years

before Grozny looks like a normal place," said Yazit Abubakarov, charged by the city with restoring utilities.

More than a month since the end of heavy fighting in Grozny, 40 per cent of the city's former population of 400,000 has returned, Mr. Abubakarov said.

But driving past the endless rows of houses wiped out by Russian bombs and shells before the rebels abandoned Grozny in December, the Russian army now controls roughly two-thirds of Chechnya and Moscow said Friday "active fighting" had ended and rebel holdouts had retreated to the hills.

Despite the constant presence of Russian soldiers, ethnic-Russian civilians interviewed across Grozny said that they felt insecure, that they would leave as soon as possible and that they did not trust the Chechens.

"We're not going to stay here, we'll go anywhere," said Anna Bakhrava, 52.

or have fed on human bodies, Dr. Akhmadov said.

"The leaders will all be Chechens again, there'll be no Russians. No one's going to rebuild all this."

Young Russians agreed.

"We're getting out of here. What can we do here? It's a mess. In the old days it was a Russian city, there were few Chechens. Then the Dzhayev lot came and started taking our apartments. It was scary," said 21-year-old Slava Petrov.

"They're already back, the Chechens, they're buying the Russians out and taking over. The militia is already run by Chechens," he said.

Chechens were more forgiving to their Russian fellow residents, but scathing about the war.

"This was totally senseless barbarity," said Magomed Oizarov, 53, surveying the blackened ruins of the Presidential Palace.

"What right did they have to do this? They have no soul, no one with any soul or beliefs could have done

this," he said.

Like other Chechens, Mr. Oizarov said he had nothing against Russians, only the Kremlin. "The Russian people living here are fine, it's their leaders I hate," he said.

But, he admitted, relations will be complicated: "After this, people could hate the Russians. No one loves them when they do this."

There has been major looting, although no one agrees who is responsible.

"The people blame the soldiers and the soldiers blame the people," said Gelani Didiyev, a 18-year-old Chechen returning to the capital for the first time.

There are the odd sniping incidents at night and Russian soldiers occasionally shoot suspects dead, officials said.

But Russian Interior Ministry troops largely run free, lounging in headbands and sunglasses on their tanks and APCs. Two shirt-

less soldiers took turns posing for pictures with a rifle and bayonet in front of the bulk of the Presidential Palace, now adorned by a small Russian flag.

But just a few kilometres outside Grozny, although under Russian control, the young conscripts immediately became tense, putting on helmets and checking weapons.

"Come on let's get out of here. I've only got four days to go and I don't want anything to happen," said the 25-year-old commander of an APC, who would only give his first name Sergei, during a patrol south of Grozny.

The soldiers said they felt no remorse for their part in destroying Grozny, only that they were doing their job.

"We couldn't get the Dudayev lot out any other way. They wouldn't put down their weapons," said Vladimir Peshov, a 19-year-old APC machinegunner.

Rabbani, Hekmatyar forces clash near Sarobi in east

KABUL (AFP) — Minor clashes were reported between groups loyal to Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani and former Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in the vicinity of the eastern district centre Sarobi, some 70 kilometres east of Kabul.

"It was only an incident between local commanders, not an organised fight," noted General Yunus Qanooni, chief of the political department of the Defence Ministry.

Mr. Qanooni said the clashes, which occurred Friday, started after a pro-Rabbani commander stepped on a landmine and was killed.

"Shooting started because the death of their commander stirred the emotions of his men," elaborated Mr. Qanooni.

He said the pro-Rabbani troops held Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami faction fighters responsible for laying the landmine, but other than this there was no other frontline

Qanooni said there have been no fresh military developments with the Taliban, and no imminent pro-Rabbani attacks are expected.

However, after the celebration of the third anniversary of the Mujahideen's victory over the Communists which falls at the end of April, Defence Ministry sources hint that renewed serious fighting will take place.

Mr. Qanooni reported that the situation in the northern provincial capital Taloqan, which was heavily bombed by Russian jets last Thursday, was now calm.

He again rejected allegations of Afghan military support from the Taliban armed opposition groups fighting the Russian-backed neo-communist Dushanbe regime.

"It is baseless propaganda

to say these groups have

bases here and receive military training in Afghanistan,"

Mr. Qanooni said.

Israelis kill 3 in Hebron

(Continued from page 1)

pected of involvement in the killing of Israelis during the Palestinian uprising.

In a leaflet, Hamas renewed its condemnation of what it called an extension of "Zionist military courts." It urged the Palestinian National Authority to cancel the court rulings and free all Palestinian prisoners.

Police said meanwhile they had seized a cache of assault rifles during a search of the home of settler Shmuel Sitton in Hebron.

Elsewhere on the day Christians celebrate their belief in Christ's resurrection, armoured personnel carriers and troops guarded worshippers in the Philippines amid sharply heightened tensions between Christians and Muslims.

Police also deployed

Turkey fears Vietnam in Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

day troops located the rebels who launched the ambush and killed 18 of their fighters in an overnight clash.

The Turkish military says they have killed 464 rebels so far, and have lost 56 of their own troops.

Four separate clashes were also reported in southeastern Turkey between the army and the rebels on Sunday. Thirteen rebels were killed in Erzincan, Bitlis, Mardin and Kars, the Anatolia agency said.

About 25,000 Turkish troops, backed by assault helicopters, moved in on a Kurdish rebel stronghold in a rugged eastern province on Sunday, military officials said.

Elsewhere a Palestinian

are completely surrounded and under our control. The PPK in the area will be taken dead or alive soon," a military official told Reuters.

Hozat and Cemisgezek

are marked with respect to earn

perpetrated by Islamic extremists have made that passage more difficult. Mr. Awad and other community representatives said.

Muslims struggle against stereotypes in the U.S.

By Slobodan Lekic

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A

spate of terrorism blamed on Islamic radicals — especially the 1993 bombing of New York's World Trade Centre — has left some of America's 5 million Muslims

discouraged and unsure of their acceptance as loyal

U.S. citizens.

Progress in the Middle East peace process and sympathy for Palestinian children living in Israeli-occupied Arab lands had generally helped the image of Muslims in the eyes of mainstream America.

Also, an increase in im-

migration in recent years due in part to turmoil in parts of the Islamic World exposed more Americans to Muslims in urban neighbourhoods and workplaces.

Muslim leaders stress

their appreciation for rights

Economy

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, APRIL 17, 1995

APEC finance ministers call for currency stability

SANUR, Indonesia (R) — Pacific rim finance ministers ended a one-day meeting Sunday without venturing to express a view on how to rein in the soaring yen, but issued a cautious appeal for more stability in currency markets.

On the sidelines, U.S. and Japanese finance ministers did tackle the region's main currency problem — what to do about the yen's surge against the dollar — but made little headway.

Some ministers said such issues were just too sensitive for the recently created Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, grouping 18 key economies from both sides of the Pacific committed to dismantling trade barriers by the year 2020.

"It was a kind of hands-off topic. I think the niceties of such meetings sort of preclude... intensive discussion of issues that might be seen to be embarrassing," Australian Treasurer Ralph Willis told Reuters financial television.

Japanese Finance Minister Masayoshi Takemura and his U.S. counterpart Robert Rubin came out of their talks, on the fringes of the APEC gathering, with differing interpretations of what they had agreed with each other.

Mr. Rubin stopped well short of welcoming Japan's recent package to halt the yen's rise and spur the domestic economy.

He said the pair had agreed to continue to work together in currency markets where appropriate, but disputed suggestions by Mr. Takemura that they had agreed to strengthen cooperation:

"I don't recollect the word strengthen. My recollection is that we agreed to continue to cooperate as we have in the past," he said.

Sunday's gathering on the palm-fringed Indonesian resort island of Bali was only the second in APEC's brief history.

Officials stressed beforehand that it was a consultative meeting and would look at long-term solutions to capital and currency problems brought into sharp relief by recent market turmoil, rather than try any short-term trouble-shooting.

Ministers agreed to offer investors more economic information to help avoid sudden fund shifts. They called for more coordination between public and private sectors in financing infrastructure development.

They agreed to meet in March next year in Kyoto, Japan.

Greenspan says inflation is under control worldwide

over the issue in the near future.

Meanwhile, the surging yen has two sides for many foreign importers, making their products cheaper but threatening sales if the high exchange rate throws Japan back into a recession.

On another issue, the head of the U.S. central bank rejected more regulation to prevent another investment bank collapse like the one suffered by Baring Brothers and Co., urging "tighter self-policing by private firms instead."

"An environment conducive to stable product prices and to maintaining sustainable economic growth is central responsibility of central banks," Mr. Greenspan said in a speech to a monetary policy conference in Stockholm, Sweden.

"Perhaps the most important development that has occurred in recent years has been the shift from an environment of inflationary expectations built into both business planning and financial contracts toward an environment of lower inflation. It is important that progress continue," Mr. Greenspan said.

"Few now question the overall benefits for economic growth and stability of the dramatic slowdown in the rate of price inflation on a worldwide basis over the past decade," Mr. Greenspan said. "Fewer should question the need to maintain a credible long-run commitment to price stability."

As for the collapse of Baring Brothers, the British investment house that lost nearly \$1 billion in the Asian futures markets, Mr. Greenspan said one lesson is that "large losses can be created quite efficiently. Today's technology enables single individuals to initiate massive transactions with very rapid execution."

But he said putting up barriers to technology or derivatives is not the answer because "suppressed markets in one location would be rapidly displaced by others outside the reach of government controls and taxes."

Greater cooperation and coordination among central banks also can assure that bank failures do not lead to panic, he said. "Provision of adequate liquidity is essential to effective containment of disturbances," Mr. Greenspan said.

Survey: More than 3m jobs to be created in U.S. this year

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. executives expect more than three million jobs to be created this year, with about half coming from businesses with less than 20 employees, a survey has said.

Dun and Bradstreet Corp.'s annual "5,000 survey of employment expectations" showed that firms with less than 100 employees are expected to account for 66 per cent of all new jobs created this year.

Larger firms with more than 5,000 employees will only account for six per cent of all new jobs in 1995, the survey said.

"Smaller and typically younger firms are taking advantage of the current economic strength to grow," said Joseph Duncan, vice president and chief economist for Dun and Bradstreet.

The survey is based on a sample of 5,000 U.S. companies selected from a database of more than 10 million American businesses. The survey is statistically representative of the distribution of firms by size and industry in the U.S. economy.

The survey showed that 24 per cent of firms with fewer than 20 employees reported plans to add jobs this year.

Thirty per cent of firms with 20 to 49 employees said they would increase employment levels, and 34 per cent of firms with 50 to 99 employees expected an increase.

Executives in the retail and service sectors expected the most job growth, while manufacturing and wholesale trade businesses predicted a decline in 1995 from the year before.

While larger firms predicted growth to be slow this year, the survey found many will still add jobs and lower the number of job cuts.

Only eight per cent of companies with 25,000 or more employees predict they will cut jobs this year, compared to 24 per cent during 1994. Twenty one per cent of these companies expect to add jobs this year, up three per cent from a year ago.

The survey also showed more employee raises this year. Executives in mining, manufacturing, transportation, utilities, financial services, real estate, wholesale trading and the government expect to increase employee compensation.

Dun and Bradstreet is the world's largest marketer of information, software and services for businesses.

Iran not to suffer much from U.S. restrictions

DUBAI (R) — Iran is not expected to suffer greatly from a proposed widening of U.S. trade sanctions but experts said Sunday Tehran would need a few weeks to find new customers if U.S. firms were barred from lifting its crude oil.

"It will zero out in the end, nobody will win and no one will lose," said a Western oil executive who frequently visits Iran.

The White House is considering options to extend trade restrictions between U.S. companies and Iran. Last month it issued an order barring U.S. firms from working to develop Iran's oil and gas industry.

But the executive said if U.S. firms were barred from purchasing Iranian crude, Tehran "will eventually find new customers to lift its oil. It will take a few weeks to sort this out."

He said he did not expect such a ban to include foreign subsidiaries of U.S. firms.

"The Americans will have to go somewhere else to compensate the loss of Iranian crude, taking up shares of other customers who will in turn go to Iran to meet their needs," he added.

Many American oil companies do business in Iran through subsidiaries with equipment manufactured in Europe and Asia to bypass a ban on export of U.S. technology to the Islamic republic.

"You just can't ignore a country with Iran's size and (oil and gas) potential," said an industry expert. Iran has the world's second largest gas reserves after Russia.

Iran, a terrorist state in the eyes of Washington, has had tense ties with the United States since the 1979 Islamic revolution and the two sides often trade accusations.

Washington, seeking to isolate Iran internationally, applies pressure on allies and international financial institutions not to help Tehran on loans and technology.

Managing director of Iran's National Petrochemical Company (NPC), Ahmad Rahgozar, threatened in remarks published Sunday to scrap contracts for supplying \$240 million worth of petrochemicals to three U.S. firms.

He told the English-language daily Iran News: "Over the last four months it (NPC) has refused to supply petrochemical projects to these companies which is a great loss to them."

But experts said failure to supply the three unnamed firms was probably due to domestic shortages.

Japan says yen debts with developing countries stand

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan again rejected calls by many developing countries for an easing of the cost of servicing loans denominated in yen which has risen in line with the fall of the dollar.

"We feel sympathy for nations holding yen loans amid the yen's surge," a Japanese foreign ministry official told AFP. "But so far, we have no plan to ease the burden only because of the short-term fluctuation in foreign exchange rates."

Many Asian currencies are linked to the dollar and many exports of commodities from Asian countries are priced in dollars.

The official said that the ministry had received scores of requests from debtor nations, particularly from Asia where 78.3 per cent of total low-interest loans by Japan are held.

At the end of 1993, Indonesia topped the loan list, with 2.46 trillion yen (\$20 billion), followed by India with 1.4 trillion yen and China with 1.3 trillion yen.

"We acknowledge their difficulties of repayment, but it is a rule that they must repay in yen because they borrow in yen," the officials said, ruling out possible renegotiation

over the issue in the near future.

Meanwhile, the surging yen has two sides for many foreign importers, making their products cheaper but threatening sales if the high exchange rate throws Japan back into a recession.

On another issue, the head of the U.S. central bank rejected more regulation to prevent another investment bank collapse like the one suffered by Baring Brothers and Co., urging "tighter self-policing by private firms instead."

"An environment conducive to stable product prices and to maintaining sustainable economic growth is central responsibility of central banks," Mr. Greenspan said in a speech to a monetary policy conference in Stockholm, Sweden.

"Perhaps the most important development that has occurred in recent years has been the shift from an environment of inflationary expectations built into both business planning and financial contracts toward an environment of lower inflation. It is important that progress continue," Mr. Greenspan said.

"Few now question the overall benefits for economic growth and stability of the dramatic slowdown in the rate of price inflation on a worldwide basis over the past decade," Mr. Greenspan said. "Fewer should question the need to maintain a credible long-run commitment to price stability."

But he said putting up barriers to technology or derivatives is not the answer because "suppressed markets in one location would be rapidly displaced by others outside the reach of government controls and taxes."

Greater cooperation and coordination among central banks also can assure that bank failures do not lead to panic, he said. "Provision of adequate liquidity is essential to effective containment of disturbances," Mr. Greenspan said.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Gold demand rises in Arab Gulf states

DUBAI (R) — Gold demand in Arab Gulf states grew by 7.2 per cent in the first quarter of 1995 despite the pressures of recession and tight budgets in the region, a World Gold Council (WGC) official said Sunday.

But Dubai's first-quarter gold consumption did not move so dramatically, climbing by only two per cent to 10.2 tonnes from 10 tonnes in the same period last year.

Most gold imported by Dubai is reexported, mostly to the Indian subcontinent where it is a common form of

investment.

Mr. Bertran said "the global recession and the tightening of the local budget" were still hampering growth in

Dubai.

He said reexports were vigorous but did not give details. Dubai's reexports were apparently buoyed by a significant rise in demand in India, the world's largest gold market.

Demand in India climbed to 124.8 tonnes in the first

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY APRIL 17, 1995

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) In the morning find a better way of using your practical talents so that you can increase your income later tonight rest up.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) This is a good morning for coming to a better understanding with a fellow associate by having a wise discussion.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can cement better relations with a partner if you take a firm stand and do not listen to fellow associates.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) By talking to an expert you can learn about extra benefits which can come to you today. Be kind.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Find new gadgets which can make living at home less tiring and more charming. Then tonight get out for the pleasure you like.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Set up appointments early this morning with those you like for this evening, but tonight be very careful in handling some money matters of importance.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You can gain the aid of good friends this morning, but forget your worries later tonight and make big headway.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Have a secret talk with a bigwig and garner the information you require for a new project today for greater success.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get together with good friends in going after new interests today and you succeed very quickly in a new assignment.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Study how you can gain greater prestige this morning, and then take the right steps in that direction.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Talking over financial affairs with your loved ones is wise this morning, but later tonight avoid some group.

Birthstone of April: Diamond — Amethyst

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen

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"Yes, I want my pickle! Yes, I want my fries! Yes, I want everything I ordered! That's why I ordered them!"

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SCOTI

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PHECO

© 1995 Tribune Media Services, Inc. All rights reserved.

TILPUF

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GLOONB

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Answer: "CREEK, PARTY, EXOTIC, PHYSIC"

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumble: CREEK, PARTY, EXOTIC, PHYSIC

Answer: What the spy considered his toupée — A TOP SECRET

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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(Answers Monday)

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Business & Finance

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, APRIL 17, 1995

JD10m private sector company to exploit Jordan mineral resources

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — After several years of deliberations, the government has given shape to a private sector entity to exploit Jordan's mineral resources, particularly in the underdeveloped south of the Kingdom, Energy of Mineral Resources Minister Samih Darwazeh said Sunday.

Expected to start operations in about two months, the JD 10 million capital company will be the first such venture to focus on minerals such as feldspar, silica, gypsum, basalt, clay etc., often cited by experts as an area left unexplored for many years despite indications that it could prove to be very lucrative.

One of the main reasons cited by the government for the lack of interest in the area was shortage of funds as well as a drive to gather private sector interest in the venture rather than investing state funds in mineral exploration.

The proposed formation of the company, which has yet to

be registered, follows the establishment of a JD 20 million capital state-owned firm to explore for oil and natural gas in the Kingdom. That company is also expected to take off around July 1.

Mr. Darwazeh said the founders of the mineral exploration firm, which will operate as a holding group, included the semi-government phosphates mines company, cement factories, ceramics company and glass wool company in addition to firms from Saudi Arabia and Egypt which he did not identify.

While some of the founding firms are majority state-owned, "the government will have nothing to do with the new company" in terms of official control, said the minister.

"The founders will provide 75 per cent of the capital, and the rest, 25 per cent will be raised from the public through shares," the minister told the Jordan Times.

Mr. Darwazeh said the

Mineral Resources had invited these companies and provided them with detailed studies of the mineral potential in Jordan and urged them to launch the venture.

"Jordan, particularly the south, is rich with minerals," said the minister. "All you have to do is to start working some of the items."

Mr. Darwazeh cited the high-quality silica available in the desert, widely used in glass industries, as an example of the potential. "We are talking about millions of tonnes of silica here," he said, noting that silica could also be used in non-glass industries after processing.

Initial studies of the desert sand have indicated the presence of vital components for fibre optic cables, precision lenses, computer chips and other industrial ceramics, according to experts at the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) and the Royal Scientific Society (RSS).

Also found were fillers for foundries, elements for sewage treatment systems, and ingredients for rubbers, paints, adhesives and scouring powers.

The studies also indicated that Jordan need not import some of the raw material it buys from Turkey and other countries for use in its foundries and could instead export some of the items.

Mr. Darwazeh said the proposed company will not launch an all-out approach and try to develop exploitation of all minerals at the same time.

The company will take one item at a time, make technical and feasibility studies and start processing and marketing it before going on to the next item, he said.

"The government will encourage any project" along these lines, he said. The government has already given permission to the private sector venture "to explore these resources" and "I hope it will start operations in about two months" after 25 per cent of the capital is raised through a public issue of shares, he added.

He told the English language daily *Al Ra'i*: "Over the last four months (NPC) has refused to supply petrochemical projects to these companies which is a great loss to them."

But experts said failure, surely, the three units firms was probably due to domestic shortages.

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

About 300 visit Petra every day

A TOTAL of 67,922 persons visited Petra during the first quarter of this year, fees collected from visitors amounted to JD 1,190,184. A monthly 12,687 foreign tourists and 3,462 Jordanians visited Petra in January; 13,260 foreign and 850 Jordanians visited the city in February and 33,400 foreigners and 5,150 Jordanians visited the city in March. According to an official at Petra, the city is witnessing a very active tourist season with approximately 300 visitors every day in addition to school trips and private visits (Al Ra'i).

He told the English language daily *Al Ra'i*: "Over the last four months (NPC) has refused to supply petrochemical projects to these companies which is a great loss to them."

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surely, the three units

firms was probably due to

domestic shortages.

*** THE ARAB Banking Corporation (Jordan) boosted its earnings from interest and commission from JD 10.7 million in 1993 to JD 11.5 million in 1994 but the net profit dropped by 8.7 per cent. The board of directors attributed the decline to two factors; an increase in administrative and general expenses by JD 462,000 last year, and an increase in the volume of deductions ordered by the Central Bank at a rate of 1.5 per cent of the total amount of "good" direct credit facilities and a rate of 0.35 per cent of the total amount of indirect facilities.

The volume of the deductions has increased from JD 159,503 in 1993 to JD 535,400 in 1994. The board recommended not to distribute any dividend this year and to transfer the '94 net profit to retained earnings to boost shareholders equity and enable the bank to distribute free shares when raising the capital to JD 20 million as required by the Central Bank. The banks 1994 annual report shows an increase of 11.9 per cent in assets to JD 154.2 per cent in deposits to JD 116.5 million (Al Aswaa).

*** THE PHILADELPHIA Insurance Company collected JD 1.69 million in premiums last year but the amount was lower than in 1993. According to the company's board chairman, stiff competition among insurance companies and the general economic conditions that prevailed were behind the decline in earnings last year. The company's 1994 annual report the transport department made a JD 5,481 profit and the fire and general accident department generated JD 102,064 in net profits. The vehicles department collected JD 1.23 million in premiums but the net result was a JD 127,094 loss of which JD 113,635 belonged to third party insurance. The company's total paid claims amounted to JD 1.13 million. The board is recommending to the general assembly retaining JD 72,793 by net profit to enable the company raise its capital (Al Aswaa).

*** THE ARAB Life and Accident Insurance Company posted a JD 745,000 net profit last year, slightly less than the JD 776,000 recorded in 1993. The board of directors is recommending to the general assembly the distribution of dividends at a rate of 16 per cent. The company earned JD 6.96 million in premiums and JD 347,000 from investment compared to JD 8 million and JD 8 million and JD 507,000 respectively in 1993 (Al Dustour).

*** STUDY is being prepared on setting up a reinsurance company in Jordan with JD 25 million capital. Insured sources said that insurance companies will share the capital of the reinsurance company along with a number of Jordanian investors. A plan in the 80s to set up a reinsurance company was elated. However, due to the recent developments in the region, the idea of establishing a reinsurance company resurfaced with the possibility of acquiring a share of \$4 billion insurance premiums in Israel and also a share of the premiums in the world (Al Aswaa).

If states

ABU DHABI (AFP) — United Arab Emirates (UAE) banks have fully recovered from the problem of bad debts after building up large reserves and they are now making high profits, the central bank said Sunday.

The bank was reacting to figures issued at a recent seminar in Sharjah showing bad and doubtful debts

surged to around 25.7 billion

dirhams (\$7 billion) in 1994 from 17.5 billion dirhams (\$4.76 billion) in 1988 and only one billion dirhams (\$272 million) in 1980.

The figures, published by the Emirates Banking Training Institute, did not make clear how interest rates were calculated on those loans.

"The central bank wishes to clarify that the figures about bad loans are now history

since the problem occurred 10 years ago," it said in a statement. "All banks operating in the UAE have suspended interests on those loans and set aside large provisions to face possible losses. Therefore, the problem of bad and doubtful debts in the UAE no longer exists."

The bad debt crisis was caused by a rush by banks to extend loans and credits during the oil boom of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Many debtors failed to repay when a decline in oil prices hit their business and plunged the whole region into a recession.

ADCB and the National Bank of Abu Dhabi, the biggest banking unit in the Emirates, suffered most but they have started to make profits in the past few years.

The biggest merger occurred between three banks in 1985 into the Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank (ADCB).

SCOPE

MONDAY, APRIL 17, 1995

THE DUSTY Page

at the morning and a general

and the evening news

and the news of the day

and the news of the

Kingdom's Davis Cup team defeats UAE 2-1

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan's Davis Cup team scored their only win of the tournament when they defeated the United Arab Emirates 2-1 on the final day of their Asia/Oceania Zone Group 3 Championship, which concluded in Dubai Sunday.

Imad Abu Hamda won the first singles match, while Faris Azzouni lost the second singles. Abu Hamda and Khaled Hussein later teamed up for the doubles match which they won to secure Jordan's first victory.

The results of the Kingdom's team mean that Jordan will again play in Group 3 next year after losing their chance of being promoted to the senior division Group 2 in 1996 since only the top team in the six-nation group will be promoted.

The Kingdom's team were disappointed Saturday when they lost their playoff against Pacific Oceania 3-0.

Earlier Jordan had lost 3-0 against Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh, and 2-1 to Lebanon.

With team veteran Imad Abu Hamda out of action with a bad cold, Khaled Hussein lost the first singles match 6-3, 6-2 to Lency Tenai of Pacific Oceania. Moutik Kailahi then beat Jordan's Faris Azzouni 1-6, 6-2, 6-2. Kailahi and Tenai later teamed up for the doubles against Hussein.

and 15-year-old Khaled Nafa'a to win 6-3, 6-3.

The round robin competition was played on a hectic, daily two singles and one doubles match format, with only the top team in the group being promoted to Group 2 whose winner is promoted to Group 1 before joining the prestigious World Group which includes teams such as the United States, Germany, and others.

The Asia/Oceania Zone Group 3 tournament in Dubai is one of the largest in Davis Cup competition as 13 teams played 108 matches at one single

STANDINGS before Sunday's matches

GROUP A

Nations	Points	Matches Won	Sets Won	Sets Lost
Singapore	5	15	30	4
Bahrain	5	12	25	8
Kuwait	3	10	23	10
Syria	2	6	14	19
Kazakhstan	1	4	12	28
Oman	1	4	8	25
Brunei	1	3	6	24

GROUP B

Nations	Points	Matches Won	Sets Won	Sets Lost
Saudi Arabia	4	10	20	6
Pacific Oceania	3	9	19	11
Bangladesh	3	8	17	10
Lebanon	2	7	17	11
Jordan	0	1	6	22
UAE	0	1	3	22

Rangers rake title without playing

GLASGOW (R) — Rangers were gift-wrapped the Scottish League soccer title on Saturday when Glasgow rivals Celtic went down 2-0 at relegation threatened Aberdeen.

Rangers secured their seventh successive championship — and 45th in all — without kicking a ball after Celtic, the only side capable of catching them, slipped up.



Martina Navratilova

No comeback in mind says Navratilova

NEW YORK (R) — She's playing on the U.S. Federation Cup team next week, she will double up with Steffi Graf at Wimbledon — but Martina Navratilova has no plans for a singles comeback.

"No. Not at all," Navratilova said in a telephone news conference from her home in Aspen, Colorado. "I am quite happy where I am and I don't intend to go back. I have no reason to go back."

Navratilova retired from playing singles fulltime at the end of last year, having won 18 Grand Slams singles titles including a record nine Wimbledon crowns. She was ranked number in the world seven times in her career.

"If I had quit at 30 I may have changed my mind, but I quit at 38 so I think I quit at just the right time," Navratilova said.

"I feel I don't have any regrets about playing too long or not playing long enough. I think this is the right time for me to stop.

"I have done my part and I am on to the rest of my life."

Navratilova's role is expected to be a limited one in next weekend's opening-round match against Austria in Aventura, Florida, despite having been a member of three championship U.S. teams and having a 36-0 career Fed Cup record in singles and doubles.

But that limited role suits Navratilova just fine.

"I am quite happy with my supporting role and hopefully will do my part," Navratilova said of her partnership with Gigi Fernandez for the one-doubles match in the best-of-five-match format.

Lindsay Davenport and Mary Joe Fernandez are listed as the singles players. There are two singles matches scheduled for the first day Saturday and two more Sunday followed by the doubles.

At the time of her retirement, Navratilova said that she would continue to play doubles on a limited basis. Just last week it was announced that she and Graf will play doubles at Wimbledon this summer.

Coach Luis Fernandez had been vindicated by the result after criticism of fielding a weak side.

Ricardo and Valdo, Vincent Guerin, Paul Le Guen, David Ginala and

Rice scores 56 to lead Miami over Orlando

MIAMI (AP) — Glen Rice scored a franchise-record 56 points, high in the NBA this season, to lead Miami to a 123-117 victory over Orlando on Saturday.

Rice, who scored 13 points in the final five minutes, broke his own team record of 46 points and topped Michael Jordan's 55-point performance against the New York Knicks earlier this year.

Rice hit 20 of 27 shots, including seven of eight 3-pointers, and added nine of 10 free throws.

Shaquille O'Neal had 38 points and 16 rebounds for the Magic, who have lost five consecutive road games and 14 of 18. Anfernee Hardaway had 28 points and 18 assists for Orlando. Horace Grant scored 21 points and Nick Anderson, returning from a four-game absence due to a concussion, had 20.

Khalid Reeves had 20 points and 14 assists for Miami, which shot 54 percent. The Magic lost despite hitting 55 percent.

Sonics 115, Warriors 99: Gary Payton, playing with a broken finger, scored 24 points and Kendall Gill, back after treatment for clinical depression, capped a fourth-quarter run that led Seattle over Golden State.

Detlef Schrempf added 23 points as the Sonics won their 11th in 13 games and stayed in the thick of a four-way race with San Antonio, Phoenix and Utah for the top playoff seed in the Western Conference.

Payton, who broke his left ring finger on Thursday night against Dallas, played in his 28th straight game. Gill hadn't played since returning on Tuesday, a week after taking a medical leave for treatment of clinical depression. He scored 10 points, including two baskets that finished off a 15-2 burst in the final period. Donyell Marshall and Clifford Rozier each scored 14 to lead Golden State.

With the Bucks' 114-110

loss to Washington, the

solidified its playoff position

with four games remaining

and never trailed in the

second half.

Bullets 114, Bucks 110: In

Landover, Maryland, Rookie

Juwan Howard tied a season

high with 31 points as the

Washington Bullets broke a

13-game losing streak by nipping

the Milwaukee Bucks.

Chris Webber had 29

points and 10 rebounds, and

Doug Overton added 16

points as the Bullets won for

the first time in four games

against Milwaukee this season.

Six Bullets scored in double figures, including reserve

Anthony Tucker, who had 10

points. Tucker hit three key

shots in the fourth quarter.

Jazz 105, Clippers 83: In Salt

Lake City, Tom Chambers' 15

points made him the 20th

player in NBA history to

surpass 20,000 career points

as the Utah Jazz defeated the

Los Angeles Clippers.

Karl Malone had 21 points

and 17 rebounds for the Jazz,

who won their third straight

and fourth in five games. The

victory pulled them within

games of idle San Antonio in

the race for the best record in

the Western Conference.

Chris Webber had 28

points, also got both of his

steals and three of his four

rebounds in the final period.

Phoenix's fifth victory in

six games left the Lakers a

game ahead of Houston in

race for the No. 5 seed from

the Western Conference.

Cedric Ceballos had 40

points and 11 rebounds for

the Lakers.

Mavericks 102, Trail Blazers

90: in Portland, Oregon Jamal Mashburn scored 29

points, including 13 in the

third period, as the Dallas

Mavericks kept their playoff

hopes alive with a victory

over the Portland Trail Blaz



Detroit Pistons' Mark West grabs the ball as New Jersey Nets' Chris Morris reaches in to knock it away (AFP photo)

for the second time in three games.

free throws in the final 1:29.

Rockets 98, Kings 84: In Houston, Kenny Smith scored 18 points, including 11 in the breakaway third quarter, as Houston beat Sacramento for its second straight victory with Hakeem Olajuwon back in the lineup.

After taking a 47-45 half-time lead, the Rockets used an 13-2 spurt to take a 72-61 lead with 2:12 to go in the third quarter, and Smith led the way to a 76-64 lead to start the fourth quarter.

Kings, who fell 1-12 in the race for the Western Conference's last playoff berth, have lost 24 of last 24 games in the summit. Their last victory was 100-97 on March 21, 1992.

Bullets 114, Bucks 110: In Landover, Maryland, Rookie Juwan Howard tied a season high with 31 points as the Washington Bullets broke a 13-game losing streak by nipping the Milwaukee Bucks.

Chris Webber had 29 points and 10 rebounds, and Doug Overton added 16 points as the Bullets won for the first time in four games against Milwaukee this season.

Six Bullets scored in double figures, including reserve Anthony Tucker, who had 10 points. Tucker hit three key

shots in the fourth quarter.

Jazz 105, Clippers 83: In Salt Lake City, Tom Chambers' 15 points made him the 20th player in NBA history to surpass 20,000 career points as the Utah Jazz defeated the Los Angeles Clippers.

Karl Malone had 21 points and 17 rebounds for the Jazz, who won their third straight and fourth in five games. The victory pulled them within

games of idle San Antonio in the race for the best record in the Western Conference.

Chris Webber had 28 points, also got both of his steals and three of his four rebounds in the final period.

Phoenix's fifth victory in six games left the Lakers a game ahead of Houston in race for the No. 5 seed from the Western Conference.

United 98, Pistons 90: In Detroit, Tom Chambers' 21 points and 17 rebounds made him the 20th player in NBA history to surpass 20,000 career points as the Detroit Pistons defeated the Detroit Pistons.

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Sports

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Ajax Amsterdam down FC Groningen

GRONINGEN, Netherlands (AP) — Patrick Kluivert scored twice as Ajax Amsterdam, with an eye on Wednesday's Champions' League semifinal showdown with Bayern Munich, beat FC Groningen 4-2 on Sunday. Ajax now leads the Dutch premier division by seven points and is unbeaten in 29 matches. Kluivert's goals in the 12th and 37th minutes took him to 18 for the season and made him Ajax's top scorer. Frank De Boer also scored on 20 minutes, to give the Amsterdam club a 3-0 half time lead and Marc Overmars added a fourth on 66 minutes. But, with the match already won and Ajax dominating both possession and territory, 11th-placed Groningen showed spirit to score second-half goals through Dian Gorre and Romano Sion. International Frank Rijkaard and Jari Litmanen were rested by Ajax manager Louis Van Gaal in preparation for the clash with Bayern.

Laudrup turns down Barcelona

GLASGOW (R) — Denmark's Brian Laudrup revealed on Sunday that he has turned down an offer to join Barcelon to stay with Scottish champions Glasgow Rangers. "Barcelona made a concrete offer a couple of months ago," said Laudrup, whose brother and fellow-Denmark international Michael once starred for the Nou Camp Club. "While it is always a pleasure and an honour to get an offer from a club like that, what I told them is that I'm very happy in Scotland." "I've had calls from Germany as well, but me and my family are happy here," added the 26-year-old striker who moved to Glasgow from Fiorentina of Italy for \$3.52 million in July.

U.S. coach says 'I did not resign'

MISSION VIEJO, California (R) — Bora Milutinovic has insisted he was ousted as United States national coach and had not resigned as reported earlier by the U.S. Soccer Federation. "Really, I didn't resign," Milutinovic, 51, told Reuter television on Saturday. And he indicated in the interview released on Sunday that he is taking legal advice regarding the circumstances of his departure. "They simply explained to me that I don't come into the federation's plans and our collaboration is over," added the man who last summer guided the Americans into the second round of the World Cup on home soil.

Vieira scores 5th Le Mans win

LE MANS (R) — Frenchman Alex Vieira, riding a Honda, made history with a record fifth win in the Le Mans 24-hour motorcycling race on Sunday. Vieira, combining with compatriot Rachel Nicolle and Scotsman Brian Morrison, covered 3384.52 kms by completing 764 laps to also set a distance record. Honda moved in front after Frenchman Jean-Louis Battistini, riding in the lead on a Kawasaki, fell early in the morning and broke his wrist. Kawasaki had won the race in the last three years and looked set for another triumph when Battistini, teaming with compatriot Jean D'Orgeix and Briton Terry Rimer, took the lead after three hours in the race on Saturday.

AIFCO assigns Publi-Graphics for advertising campaign

An agreement was recently signed in Amman between the Arab International Food & Oil Processing (AIFCO) and Publi-Graphics Advertising Agency, whereas Publi-Graphics will carry the campaign on a regional level.

Arab Food and Oil Processing Co. Ltd. was established from a substantial Jordanian capital in order to provide and market the best quality oil in the region.

Accommodated with the latest and highest technology in the world, with special plant lines for producing margarine and shortening, managed by experienced personnel, to enhance the quality of the product. Produced to compete in local and international markets the Arab International Food and Oil Processing Co. Ltd. will launch one of its first quality products in the imminent future Murjan corn oil which will be accompanied by a campaign

to market their product in Jordan and abroad.

When asking Mr. Fouad Abel Latif, General Manager of Publi-Graphics Jordan on their advertising plan, he said:

"Being chosen by the Arab International Food and Oil Processing Co. Ltd. from several competitive agencies is our joy and pride. We have arranged on advertising campaign to cover the whole region and we are confident of our success to carry this campaign on both local and regional level.

Arab Food & Oil Processing Co. Ltd. has devoted all its resources to guarantee the quality of its products on a local and international level to provide for the consumer, the best quality and competitive pricing and we are confident that the products of this company will meet what is required and demanded by our consumer in the region."

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MODERN FURNISHED APARTMENTS
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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TANIAH NIBSCHE
STORY TELCO MUSIC SERVICES, INC.

THE HIDDEN CHANCE

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH

♦ K
♦ A 4 2

♦ A 8 6 2

♦ Q 10 9 7 5 3

WEST

♦ Q 9 6 2

♦ J 10 8 7 5

♦ 8 6

♦ J 9 5

♦ K 10 6

♦ 8 6 4

♦ Q 6

♦ SOUTHEAST

♦ A 4 3

♦ A K Q 3

♦ A Q 7 4

♦ A K

The bidding:

South West North East

♦ 6 Pass ♦ 2 Pass Pass

3 NT Pass ♦ 4 Pass Pass

6 NT Pass Pass Pass

debatable".

West led a low spade, knocking out a key entry to dummy before it

could be put to use. Declarer cashed the ace and king of clubs, only to receive the bad news that there was

no way to enjoy the table's long club.

The only suit to offer any hope

was diamonds. Declarer cashed to the jack of hearts, discarded a spade on the queen of clubs, then successfully finessed the queen of diamonds. When declarer cashed the ace of diamonds, East defended perfectly by jettisoning the king to West. West was able to cash the jack of diamonds and cash the jack of clubs for a spade trick set. A combination of bad luck and fine defense was declarer's undoing.

Despite East's heroic effort, the

contract should have been fulfilled.

After unlocking the high clubs, declarer should have led a low

monk from hand and then winning the

spade trick, declarer can get to the

board with the jack of hearts, cash

the queen of clubs for a spade dis-

card and then take the diamond fi-

nesse. When that succeeds and both

defenders follow to the ace, the 13th

diamond becomes declarer's 13th

trick.

Opening lead: Two of ♦

Sometimes it is easy to spot an

additional chance to make your con-

tract. Nuggets that are far down

through, are difficult to ascertain.

The bidding was in a duplicate

even. South's first two bids showed

a balanced hand of 25-27 points and

North decided the six-card suit

made slam a possibility. Despite the

fact it was a pairs contest, South's

decision to correct to the higher-

scoring contract was at best

Courier upsets Agassi for Japan Open title

TOKYO (AP) — Jim Courier spoiled Andre Agassi's debut as the world No. 1, outslugging him 6-3, 6-4 Sunday in the final of the Japan Open.

Playing in chilly winds before nearly 10,000 spectators, many of them cheering for Agassi, Courier set up match point with a backhand lob just over his opponent and then claimed victory when Agassi sent a forehand long.

Agassi had saved one previous match point on his own serve at 3-5 in the second set, blasting an inside out cross-court forehand past Courier.

Agassi, who has been troubled by a back strain since Davis Cup preparations last month, was in no danger of losing his ranking. Fellow American Pete Sampras, who headed the rankings for 82 weeks until last Monday, lost two days later in the second round of a tournament in Barcelona, Spain.

"I feel like I didn't play great today by any means," Agassi said. "Some had to do with the back, some had to do with conditions and the wind, and a lot had to do with Jim and the way that he was playing."

He added: "You can't be casual or lackadaisical or compromise your movement with Jim. He's one of the best players in the world. I felt like the odds were a little bit against me going out there on the fatigue factor, my back, and the conditions."

Agassi said it was nice to see Courier playing this well again, but "I'm not too excited that it's at my expense."

Courier, a former No. 1 who had gone more than 10 months without beating a top ten player, reached the final here by beating fellow American Michael Chang, ranked sixth, in the semifinals.

He collected \$156,000 for the victory.

"I had a good week. It makes me more hungry to play well," said Courier, who now has three titles this year despite his drought against top ten players. He came to Tokyo ranked 15th in the world.

"I adapted and reacted. That's all you can do" against Agassi, he added.

"At the end I was a little nervous, but I closed it out so I feel a lot better."

Agassi, who came into the final with a 30-2 match record and three singles titles this

year, will go home with \$82,100. Because of his back strain, he already had said Saturday that he was skipping the coming week's tournament in Hong Kong for a few weeks of rest and treatment.

Courier now has won seven of his 11 meetings with Agassi, but the two had not played since Courier won in the quarterfinals of the U.S. Open in 1992.

"I broke Agassi in the second game, but Agassi broke back twice for a 3-2 lead. Then Courier broke twice, gaining the key break on a passing shot down the line, and served out the first set.

In the second set, Courier's

service break in the first game held up, and he almost broke again for the match at 3-3.

At 5-4, he came back from 15-30 with a deep forehand and angled volley combination, hit a winning lob and watched an Agassi forehand fly long.

In the women's final, Amy

Frazier saved two set points

in the first set and one in the second as she foiled Kimiko Date's attempt for a fourth straight Japan Open championship.

Frazier, who lost in last

year's Japan Open final to Date, took this year's title with a 7-6 (7-5), 7-5 triumph in one hour, 40 minutes.

The second-seeded American pounded deep backhands and Date, seeded first, scored with sharp angles.

Serving at 5-6 in the first

set, Frazier survived two set points at 15-40 on two errors by Date, the World No. 8.

In the tiebreak, Frazier, ranked 18th, jumped to a 6-3 lead. Date saved two set points before netting a backhand.

Date led 5-4 in the second set and had one set point that Frazier saved with a forehand

set point at 15-40 on a Date error.

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Libyans threaten revenge for raid

TRIPOLI (Agencies) — Protesters outside the U.N. office in the Libyan capital Tripoli are threatening to take revenge for a 1986 U.S. raid on Libya.

"We are staging the sit-in to support our demand that the (U.N.) Security Council gives us our rights and punishes as war criminals all those who took... the decision to launch the raid and those who took part in it," Mounir Charmit, a spokesman for the families of the raid's victims, told foreign journalists on Saturday night.

"If our demands are not satisfied, we will take revenge by all means," he added.

"We want revenge, revenge, revenge," shouted a tearful Mousab Zlitni, a protester who says two of his children were killed in the raid.

The Libyan protesters, who number about 100 and include women, began their demonstration on Saturday in a tent pitched some 20 metres from the U.N. office in Tripoli.

On April 13, 1986, U.S. warplanes flying from British bases and U.S. aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean bombed targets in Tripoli and Benghazi, Libya. Said more than 40 people were killed, nearly all civilians.

Washington said the raid was in response to an explosion at a Berlin discotheque in which two Americans were killed. The U.S. blamed Libya but Tripoli denied the charge.

Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi on Saturday marked the anniversary with a call to the U.N. to probe all violent incidents linked to Tripoli in the past decade, including the 1988 bombing, blamed by Washington on Libya, of an airliner over the town of Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people.

The protesters have handed the U.N. office chief letters addressed to the United Nations over their demands. "We have been making these demands since 1986. But our patience has limits. If the U.N. does not satisfy our demands, that will legitimise our revenge actions as families of the victims," said Yousef Al Ayeb, the movement's coordinator.

Iraq Kurds are reluctant partners in Turkish push

SALAHUDIN (R) — Iraqi Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani, angered by Turkey's anti-rebel push in northern Iraq, is digging in his heels in talks with Ankara over future security arrangements in the region, his aides said on Sunday.

Turkey sent 35,000 troops into Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq on March 20 to attack bases of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) which is fighting a separatist insurgency inside Turkey.

Turkey says after it withdraws — possibly within weeks — it wants the cooperation of Mr. Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) of Jalal Talabani in fighting PKK cross-border raids.

In 1992, in a similar but smaller incursion into northern Iraq, Turkey secured the help of the Iraqi Kurds in attacking the Turkish Kurdish PKK.

Their three-party agreement broke down and this time Mr. Barzani appears unwilling to be drawn into Turkey's war. He has called for Turkey to pull out of northern Iraq.

"I think he will ask for more concrete things from Turkey than in 1992 in return for his help," Sami Abdul Rahman, a senior KDP politburo member, told Reuters. "Like help with rebuilding border villages and giving people incentives to do the job. It must provide more logistical help than before — that is why the agreement broke down... we have begged Turkey and the PKK not to bring their fight here."

Iraqi Kurds complain of damage to their property and civilian injuries caused by the incursion. Turkey denies its troops have attacked civilians and accuses the PKK "terrorists" of killing villagers.

Mr. Barzani, bitter from losing his capital Erbil and some 200 fighters to the PUK last month, is unlikely to cooperate well with his old rivals despite reaching a ceasefire this month.

"Barzani wants all military out of Erbil first and that is not acceptable to the PUK," he added.

5 killed in blasts in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — Two people were killed and five injured in three blasts by homemade bombs in the western Algerian town of Mostaganem, the daily *La Tribune* reported Sunday.

The bombs which went off Thursday had been planted in a high school and college near a police station in central Mostaganem, the paper said.

"More than one million Libyans are ready to fight all along the Libyan coasts, and to change the desert, waters, and sands into a hell... our fighting is continuing and shame and defeat to the imperialists and the traitors."

Col. Qaddafi, two weeks after saying Libya would leave the United Nations, also reaffirmed his support for its authority.

The Libyan leader was speaking from his Tripoli home on the ninth anniversary of the 20-minute raid that killed his 15-year-old daughter.

He said the United Nations should show its independence by investigating the U.S. raid while it investigates the Lockerbie bombing.

"We welcomed the submission of any international issue to the Security Council, and any dispute between Libya and America be referred to the Security Council," he said.

"We continue to adhere to the U.N. Charter" and recognise that the U.N. settles the disputes between the nations," Col. Qaddafi said.

He said in an interview with the New York Times published April 5 that the United Nations had outlived its usefulness and that Libya would be leaving it.

Libya has been under a ban on air travel and economic and diplomatic relations since 1992 because it refuses to hand over two men wanted in the Lockerbie bombing.

Col. Qaddafi also indicated Libya might drop its demand to have former President Ronald Reagan, who ordered the attack, put on trial in a Libyan court because he is suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

"This does not play down the seriousness of these crimes and foolish policies committed in the Reagan era," Col. Qaddafi said.

Iraq Kurds are reluctant partners in Turkish push

SAUDI ARABIA (R) — Iraqi Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani, a senior member of the Iraqi National Congress (INC) — a coalition opposed to the Iraqi government in Baghdad.

Turkey, traditionally closer to the KDP and hostile to the PUK, because of its PKK links, feels it must involve the PUK because of its military strength.

It also hopes closer ties could help sever links between the PUK and Turkey's separate guerrillas, INC sources said.

Mr. Barzani said Ankara had proposed a plan to Mr. Barzani in which both militaries would patrol the 320-kilometre border with Turkey, each Iraqi guerrilla getting \$50 per month plus food from Turkey.

The northern part of Iraqi Kurdistan, including the entire Turkish border, is controlled by the KDP. Iraqi government forces to the south are kept at bay by a Western air exclusion zone imposed after the Gulf war in 1991.

"We would not allow the PUK to send any men to the border," Mr. Abdul Rahman said.

"We do not want the PUK to launch attacks on other countries from here, we condemn them. The PUK sold out on Turkey in 1992. It told Ankara it would destroy the PUK. It told the PUK it would destroy Turkey. I thought Turkey had learned from this."

He said it was not yet decided if Mr. Barzani would accept an invitation to go to Turkey for further talks.

But other KDP members said Mr. Barzani needed to go to Turkey as the incursion was damaging his political and military position.

"Relations between Turkey and Barzani were so good that people thought we had both arranged the incursion," one KDP official said.

"But we only heard about it when the tanks rolled in. The incursion has done a lot of harm to people. Villages had to be evacuated, at least 40 villagers, there has been loss of life, of property and no compensation from Turkey," he added.

"Barzani wants all military out of Erbil first and that is not acceptable to the PUK," he added.



TRIUMPHANT RETURN: Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto adjusts her scarf as her party supporters thronged the airport to greet her upon her return home from the United States on Sunday. Ms. Bhutto said her

Kabariti heads for U.N., says NPT should cover Israel

AMMAN (J.T.) — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti headed for New York on Sunday to take part in a review of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Jordan supports Egypt's stand that Israel should endorse the convention, which will lead to international inspections of the Jewish state's nuclear installations.

Israel, which reportedly possessed 200 nuclear warheads, says it would not sign the treaty before Arab states like Syria, Libya and Iraq as well as Iran make peace with the Jewish state.

In departure comments carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Kabariti said Jordan "will seek to ensure that Israel will not be excluded from joining the treaty and will be committed to its conditions."

"Israel's nuclear programmes have to be internationally supervised to ensure that they will not cause any security or environmental risks in the region," Mr. Kabariti said.

In other developments, the daily *Al Watan* reported that Abdul Kader Hadi Ben-Naamane, a journalist with the Algerian press agency, was being held by authorities in the far south region of Tamanrasset, for writing an article, which had not been published, about the two leaders of the FIS, Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj.

The United Nations review of the NPT begins in New York on Monday.

Representatives of the 17 NPT signatories are to attend the New York session. Voting on extending the treaty would take place before the forum ends on May 12.

The NPT, which entered into force in 1970 for 25 years, pledges all but the five atomic powers to forego nuclear weapons, accept safeguards on all nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency and have access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

On the eve of the U.N. meeting, Egypt on Sunday called again for Israel to sign the international convention.

But in making his appeal, Foreign Minister Amr Musa did not repeat Egypt's earlier threat not to support renewal of the treaty if Israel does not join.

"There is no question of signing — that Israel would sign or Egypt would sign," Mr. Musa told reporters in Cairo. "But we call on Israel to join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, that's for sure."

He added: "This is our position and it will continue to be the same."

The United States has been lobbying for indefinite extension of the pact. But some developing nations have argued for periodic review.

Jordan will also coordinate with Arab countries and the Non-Aligned Movement to guarantee that all countries are committed to the treaty, including Israel, he said.

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The NPT, which entered

(Continued on page 7)

Manila believes Saudi jailed in U.S. key figure in extremist group

MANILA (AP) — An Arab businessman jailed in California is believed to be a pivotal figure in a network of extremists accused of conspiracies ranging from the World Trade Centre bombing to plots to blow up U.S. airliners over the Pacific.

Mohammad Jamal Khalifa was arrested last December in Santa Rita, California, for allegedly falsifying his visa application. Immigration and Naturalisation Service spokesman Greg Gagnon said Mr. Khalifa is being held without bond in San Francisco pending deportation.

Mr. Khalifa, a Saudi national, was convicted in absentia in Jordan last January of plotting terrorism and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

U.S. authorities have said little about Mr. Khalifa and he has not been charged with any offences in the Philippines.

But Philippine Interior Secretary Rafael Alunan said Mr. Khalifa is an in-law of billionaire Osama Bin Laden, who bankrolled Arab volunteers to fight in Afghanistan during the 1980-1989 war against the Soviets and has since been accused by Yemen, Egypt and Algeria of financing subversion. He lives in Khartoum, Sudan.

According to sources in the Philippines and the Middle East, Mr. Khalifa owned a ratty furniture factory here and made frequent visits to this country in the early 1990s.

The sources, speaking on condition they not be further identified, said Mr. Khalifa established or financed several Islamic organisations in the Philippines, ostensibly for charity and religious work, which were in fact conduits for money to extremist

groups. Among them was the Imam Shafie Institute, a Muslim training centre in Patikul, a fishing village on the southern Philippine island of Sulu.

Mr. Khalifa has not been charged with any offenses in the Philippines, but authorities here believe he was a key figure in efforts to recruit new members of the Abu Sayyaf group, a Filipino movement blamed for numerous attacks on Christians, including the April 4 raid on the southern town of Ipi in which 53 people died.

On Sunday, Japan's Kyodo News Service quoted a "highly classified" Philippine intelligence report as saying Mr. Khalifa's network had established links with extremists in Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Russia, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates, Romania, Lebanon, Syria, Pakistan, Albania, the Netherlands and Morocco.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

UAE forms new parliament

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The president of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Sunday appointed a new parliament two months after its two-year term had expired, the official agency WAM reported. It was not immediately clear if Abu Dhabi's Al Haj Ben Abdullah Al Muhaibri would remain as speaker of the 40-strong Federal National Council (FNC) which has several new members, according to a decree issued by President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahyan. The FNC, whose term had expired in February, is made up mainly of businessmen and leading figures, drawn proportionately from the seven emirates in the 24-year-old federation. Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the biggest and wealthiest emirates, are represented by eight members each while Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah have six each and the remaining members are drawn equally from the Umm Al Quwain, Ajman and Fujairah. The UAE is run by the rulers of the seven emirates, the Supreme Federal Council, which held its annual meeting on Sunday to discuss domestic affairs and other issues, WAM said.

Controversial film sweeps eight awards

CAIRO (R) — The Egyptian cinema industry has awarded eight prizes to a controversial film that narrowly escaped being banned for allegedly depicting Joseph, whom Muslims revere as a prophet. In a star-studded ceremony on Saturday, a panel of judges awarded "Al Mohager" (The Emigrant) Egypt's most prestigious awards for best film, cinematography, soundtrack, editing, set design and costumes as well as a prize for the male lead, Khaled Al Nabawy, and the director, Yousef Shahin. The film has been widely understood to be an allegory involving Joseph, revered by Muslims, Christians and Jews as a prophet. Mr. Shahin, a veteran of the Egyptian cinema world, successfully fought off an attempt by an Islamist lawyer to have the film banned on the grounds that it broke the Islamic ban on portraying prophets. A judge ruled in favour of the lawyer last year but a Cairo appeals court in March dismissed the case, saying the lawyer had no direct interest in the case.

Vienna attack not the work of PKK

VIENNA (AFP) — A firebomb attack on a Turkish Airlines office "was not the work of radical Kurdish groups, according to initial inquiries," police here said Sunday. At first police thought it could have been carried out by supporters of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), after a spate of similar incidents in Germany where the group is banned. However, they found a red flag bearing a star identified as that of Turkish far-left group, the DHKC, which police believe is close to the radical Turkish organisation Dev-Sol (Revolutionary Left) trying to establish communism in Turkey. Similar flags were found at the scene of three attacks on Turkish groups in Germany at the end of March. The Turkish Airlines incident occurred overnight Friday when firebombs were thrown through a window, starting a fire which was quickly put out by firefighters. There were no injuries but security was stepped up around Turkish interests in Vienna.

Vanunu to eat leaven bread during Passover

ASHKELON (AFP) — Jailed spy and nuclear expert Mordechai Vanunu, who has converted to Christianity, has been allowed to eat leaven bread during the Jewish Passover celebrations, a prison spokesman said Sunday. Mr. Vanunu had requested not to be given the unleavened bread that Jews have been eating since Friday for the eight-day Passover marking their Biblical escape from Egypt. Bakeries in Israel close during the period, so "we have frozen round loaves for him," the spokesman told reporters. Mr. Vanunu is serving an 18-year sentence for having passed information and photos to London's Sunday Times in October 1986 of Israel's top-secret Dimona nuclear reactor, in the southern desert, where he had been working.

Japanese give Arafat hope of fresh aid

GAZA CITY (AFP) — A Japanese delegation touring the Middle East urged Yasser Arafat on Sunday to improve the Gaza Strip's economy and hold out hope of fresh aid for the self-rule territory. "I hope the Palestinians will work hard on the improvement of their economy and also to promote peace in the Middle East," said Katnari Suzuki, a senior Japanese government aid official. "We would like to continue giving as much assistance as possible." Mr. Arafat said he hoped the Palestinians could soon acquire Japanese technology. "Japan is one of the most important donors helping our people. We are looking to get Japanese technology in our industrial zones and we are sure our Japanese friends will help us," he said. The 22-member delegation was sent to the Middle East to assess whether Japan should send United Nations peacekeeping troops to the Golan Heights. The group, which is due to return to Japan on Wednesday, has already travelled to Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel. On Friday Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said his country would support any Japanese contribution to the